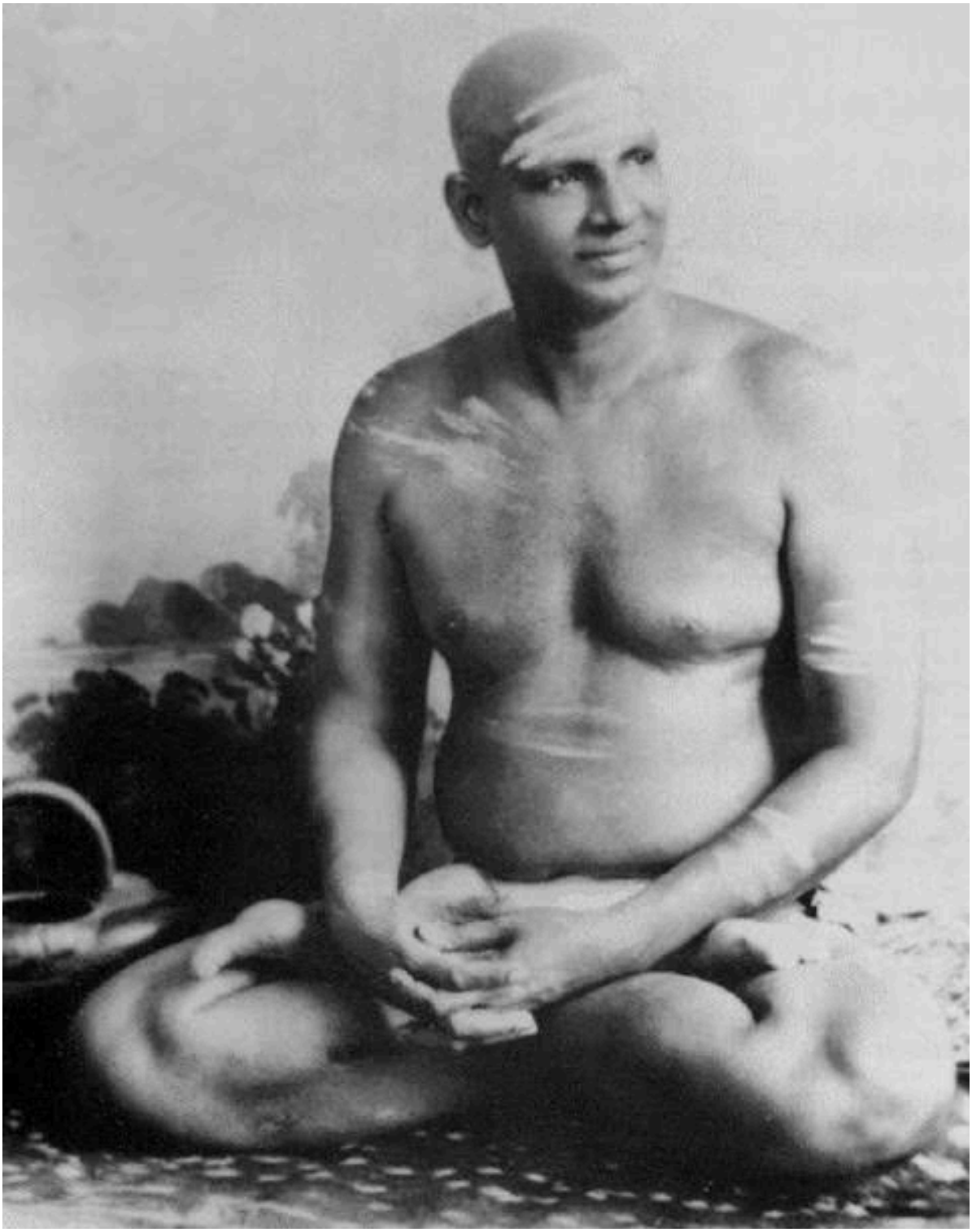

B. Bhattacharya

Śaivism and the Phallic World

Saivism
And
The Phallic World

B. Bhattacharya

Volume II

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Chapter Six

The Saiva Siddhantas

A. Orthodox Southern Siddhanta

I

The Siva Schools

"The Saiva Philosophy," says Dr. S. N. Shastri, "is typical of the entire range of Hindu thought." This appears to be true. Like all other systems of Hindu thought the Saiva system too had to pass through the close scholarly enquiries which are no characteristic of the subtle Hindu mind. Śaivism as a system of spiritual metaphysics, through the centuries, pendulated between Idealistic Monism and Realistic Pluralism.

Whilst this could be so for Hindu thought in general, and of Saivism in particular, it need not, however, cause any surprise. Any system flourish- ing over centuries at a stretch without any break, and which had to absorb, like a flowing river, a number of tributary opinions which typify different ages and people, is expected to contain signs of different grains of thinking.

The basic teachings of Saivism, like those of the Upanisads, enjoy, in this way, a freedom from dogma; these are distinguished by a rich variety of forms. Various explanations have been offered from time to time for justifying Saivic stoicism on the one hand, and elaborating its mystic recensions on the other. Naturally, therefore a number of schools, all sheltered under the umbrella of Saivism, has left a library of spiritual literature and religious forms, all inspired with the fulfilment of transcendental realisation. Most of these seek the abstract; some of these attempt to reduce the abstract to mythological objectivity; andvery few indeed, persist in their phallic forms reminding of their primitive fertility motifs.

The pure monists believe in an idealised Siva-concept. These are the Kashmir Siddhantins, who hold on to monism with a Vedantic conformity. These are the

propounders of Sphota, Spanda, Pratyabhijñā and Trika. All these schools belong to a heritage of metaphysical rationalisation, leading to knowledge and realisation. This is not to say that all Śaivas are pure monists. The Southern Siddhantins and the Lingayats are not. The other extreme of realistic pluralism is held by obscurantist sects like the Pasupatas, the Mahāvratas, the Kapālas, the Bhairavas, the Vāmās, etc. By and large in the sophisticated Hindu Hierarchy of systems, these latter are considered as mystically remote, and formally obscure, and at most times ethically abhorrent. The phallic primitivity in Siva worship has never been seriously considered in Hindu metaphysics.

These extremes of popular religious practices range from paleolithic adoration of crude nature in tooth and claw, to abstract meditation and aesthetic dedication. Extremes of religious faith characterise extremes of metaphysical arguments. The presence of such extreme opinions with- in the Saiva schools of thought go to show (1) how ancient Śaivism is; (2) how widely popular is its universal influence; (3) how many trends of opinions have found accommodation in Saivism; and lastly (4) how liberal is the term Śaivism as different from the codified rigidity of Brāhmaṇical Vedism. Śaivism ranges from strict conservatism to liberal, even communistic proletarianism. Šiva happens to be the most popular 'god' of the Hindu faith; he also enjoys the distinction of being adored by all, irrespective of castes. He is adored by the Danavas, Yakṣas, Rākṣasas, Kinnaras, Ganas, Guhyas, Siddhas, who are not the Devas, or the elect.

The monistic form of Saivism leads towards individual rigours, most of which prove to be very trying. All of these are strictly ascetic. Śaivism being closely attached to Yogism has to be ascetic. Śiva has been termed as the Prince of the Yogis, Yogiraja, or Yogesvara. But it is not so with the dualistic Saivism. Dualistic Saivism leads to the Tantric practices, where the acceptance of Mother-image permits bi- sexual participation, and encourages to live the life of a householder. This would not be permitted to a monastic and a monist, who must conform to the rigours of asceticism.

There is still another form, the realistic pluralism which is diversified by a number of sectarian ritualism to be discussed later. It is permissive and congregational. Its mystic obscurantism, and its crude eroticism have always drawn scorn from a section of spiritualists. Quite a large section of this class like the celebrated Freemasons, thrives under a cover of underworld mysticism. But to call this mysticism would behighly erroneous. Of all forms of worship current in the Hindu fold, this one particularly appears to bear a distinct stamp of alien origin. It appears to be so because it appears to be dependent on the riff-raffs of spiritual dilettantes, who have little need either for a metaphysical base, or a philosophical content. At its best the form could only relate it to some primitive forms.

A study of history, as of philosophy, has been regarded by scholars, specially of the last two centuries, as antagonistic to religious beliefs. But modern history-writing itself has grown into a philosophical exercise of its own kind. Acceptable justifications for religions demand for Ex- their sustenance some philosophical base, and historical support. treme empirical claims have been found to mislead the mind. Unrestrict- ed emphasis on empiricism leads to scepticism; and a sceptic mind falls an easy prey to a cynical vacuum of spirit. Faithlessness is not always a particularly helpful guide for man to live in peace with himself.

Religion and Philosophy

In spite of it all, most modern minds find it very hard to accept a religion to respond to their inner quest for peace, specially when they associate religion with mere dogmas and forms unrelated to any sub- stantial content. The modern mind has lost its faith in faith as a performer of miracles. Those who still advocate the gifts of faith have been stigmatised as weak minded individuals, victims of regimentation and euphoria.
Reason and analysis must fill in the emptiness created by the interrogative man, who is so well packed with a variety of cheap informa- tion, for good or bad, from all over the world.

In a developing culture, and in our present state of sophistication, philosophical thinking becomes more than ever an integral part of the true life of religion, and a condition of its effective renewal and perpetuation in a form we can wholeheartedly acknowledge and find adequate to the needs of our times at all levels.1

Of course, we fully appreciate and endorse this view of Dr. Lewis in a world where demands of self-expression, socialism and democracy have successfully removed authoritarian autocracy and monarchical despotism. That the authoritarian and dogmatic stand of churches and church-heads would be successfully challenged, or even denounced, is quite understandable. The progress of reason in defiance of

dogma

is correlative to the progress of the people in defiance of autocratic authority. Religion, in order to fully satisfy the human craving for spiritual peace, must be substantiated by a rational and philosophical content. Religion too calls for its dialectics. Hindu thought fully supplies it, and in profusion.

Hence the Six Systems; the Upanisads; hence the correlation between Hindu Grammar, Hindu logic and Hindu philosophy. Even the grammar of Hindu Music, Dances, Sculpture, Architecture, nay, even the Hindu alphabets (very difficult to believe it) are correlated to metaphysical con- tents leading to the quest of the inner spirit. Nothing is left to guess, hypothesis or dogma. Herein lies the secret of the success of this most ancient way of life, known as the Hindu life.

Theologians, for their own reason, and communists for theirs, are expected to contradict the above view. In the eye of one, religion without philosophy is as reliable, as in eye of the other, both religion and philosophy, are obstructionist and redundant

to

the ultimate social fulfilment of the common man. Both these views lack the objectivity of the dispassionate; and are open to prejudices that single-track minds often find themselves led to.

Life without wonder and without the joy in wonderment, could become boring as an existence without meaning and purpose. Mere vegetation- existence is continuity without meaningfulness. Any attempt to discover this meaningfulness in life calls for a

dedicated emotive subjectivity. To consider matter alone, or materialistic causation alone, out of the context of Reality, is an absurdity. Life has a purpose. To discover it is Dharma; to act on it is Karma; to benefit by it is Kama; and to be finally liberated from it through fulfilment is Mokṣa.

Thus the need to feel, to participate and to react becomes imperative for the growth of an individual who could relate existence to meaningfulness and purpose. The appreciation of the full state of manhood of an individual in a clan or community adds confidence to life. This inherent subjectivism of living distinguishes man with the stamp of individuality. The biological human entity is not the psychological man; and the psychological man is not the metaphysical thinker. Man is biologically a machine; metaphysically a thinker; and psychologically an individual. His identity demands a recognition of all the three. He could be happy only spiritually. Modern studies of mind and feelings, of matter and nature of matter, have been gradually breaking down the barriers that had kept religion and philosophy so long apart. To think is to take recourse to philosophy. Science has progressed along the path of analysis; but philosophy releases the charm that synthesis provides. Philosophical thinking has been disciplining gradually the unchartered boundaries of man's mind-boundaries which

are
laid down by well intended beliefs- religious, social or political. All our views regarding material existence are being highly influenced by how we think about the material world we live in, which alone could help us to know the very nature of existence. If we want to be happy, we have got to be aware of our inner personality where we are essentially alone and spiritually accompanied.

The ethical man needs moral thinking, that is, a training in correct appropriation and allocation of values. The full enjoyment of our happiness is inextricably involved with our sense of good and bad, right and wrong. In what we call our practical life, we may succeed in by- passing philosophical scruples at certain times; but in arriving at practical decisions, we could be nobly and profitably assisted by a scrupulous evaluation of choice, and discriminating logic of consequence. Our failure to do this

could lead to lamentable tragedies. To attend to such fore- thoughts is to develop patience for the mind, and toleration for behaviour. Insistence on achieving these, develops our personality on the one hand, and engenders on the other in us the very rewarding virtue of collective responsibility.

Sense of responsibility affects sense of duties; and sense of duty may undergo variations according to varied situations. When we are called upon to decide on declaring a war on cholera, we do not put exactly the same set of logic to test, as when we are called upon to decide on declaring a war on another country or people. Philosophy, then, can make a considerable difference in some ways to the activities or other subject matter which the philosopher investigates and I believe that sound philosophical thinking can- not only prevent us from falling into misleading errors, or provide us with illuminating distinctions, but in other ways extend our sensitivity, and deepen our experience in such matters as aesthetics, ethics, or the pursuit of science. The notion that philosophy influences nothing beyond itself is the product of a very negative and narrowly formal conception of the task of philosophy current today.2

In no other field the truth and the wisdom of the above view (of a noted philosopher and scholar of comparative religion) proves so true as in religion. The view that religion and philosophy are opposed to each other is, thanks to a subtle, refined and thorough study of the East by the West, and vice versa, being entirely replaced by the realisation that all great religions are fundamentally based on philosophy. Religions, which have been surviving on authorities of voiced truth, fall victim to dogmas which are being found more and more untenable. Such religions are realising the need for a re-visioning of their earlier stands. Practising dogmatic religions based on words of prophets are gradually readjusting their positions, so that these could answer the insistent demands of the over-growing national claims of a highly informed generation. A slant of emphasis from rituals to ethics, from sectarianism to ecumenism, from prejudice and authoritarianism to logic and understanding is now being happily noticed

all around. Religion is being re-claimed through the application of philosophy to a scientific reassessment of history, which includes anthropology.

Compared to these, those religions which draw from truths realised, and statements
made by a number of masters of the spiritual world, and others based on a consideration of man's eternal query about the logic and nature of things, are being revalued and rejudged as sources for rational approaches to the nature of god and
creation. Today, more than ever, theological scholars need the assistance of philosophical thinkers. Religious contents have to be rationalised for easier acceptance and assimilation. Growth of democracy is not very conducive to citations of authorities in matters of conscience, ethics and morals.

Dogma and democracy are the opposing poles of the human mind. Any faith founded on an individual mind which has subjected itself to a personal acceptance, has to await the matured blossoming of an under- standing. To a large extent it has to await and appropriate historical situation. Faith, flourishing against a conducive force, and background of history alone, is expected to produce the desired results. This is as true of the religion of spiritual progress, as of the religion of Marxian dialectics. The faithfuls of the society have to choose their time for taking pains in training the society through individuals trained and tested for their spiritual contents. Religions, to be effective and fruitful must draw faith from understanding. This observation could be true of a spiritual, social or political religion. It is Dharma for the convinced; not for the zealot. Even the so-called mystic religions have to turn back at some stage, and face obstinate quests from individuals regarding the prognosis and the rationale of their rites, practices, dogmas and motives. This fundamental principle was inlaid in the Hindu mind. By attaching religion with philosophy it liberated all dogmas through the sabrecuts of reason. In Hinduism religion and philosophy meet inextricably. Hinduism, strictly speaking, is more a well thought out practical way to attaining peace, than a 'religion'. This accounts for its perpetuity. This accounts for its faith in coexistence.

This also accounts for its insistence as being called a Dharma. Mokṣa or liberation

from doubts, from worries, from depression, from complexes, in Hinduism is more important than Heaven. This, socially and individually speaking is the chief difference between Hinduism and Vedism.

This has nowhere been as rigidly laid down as in the ancient treatises of the Hindus. The Vedas provide the pasture from which the body of the Upanisads draw their sustenance, and collect the milk of thought; and the Gita draws all the milk to feed the common man with spiritual awareness. In the history of human analysis of the transcendental, the place of the Upanisads ranges very high indeed. Herein for the first time, attempts have been made to present a synthetic rationale about a central conscious subjectivity. For the first time reference was made to the cosmic conscious field. This central conscious cosmic field was presented as asubject-object mystic complex. The full realisation of this knowledge, realised, through meditation alone, could lead to the Supreme Entity, from which proceed thought, thinker and thinking. Thus, from the very remotest of times spiritual guidance of an utmost technical nature had been laid down for the benefit of posterity. The cult of realism which led the Western mind for over a century to acquiesce to the acceptance of cold materialism has only lately received some shock through modern military threats. The apparent urgency for peace is really inspired by the fear of a total annihilation as an alternative. Such an approach lacks the spirit of ethical alertness. A reassessment of the cult is gradually turning the disillusioned and the frustrated to look for saner counsel in the idealism of Hindu and Buddhist thoughts. Even the age-old Greek heritage of Thales, Plato, Parmenides, Pythagoras is being reassessed in this light; and the antiquity of Hindu idealism is being gradually recognised. Scholars are getting keen and earnest in re-discovering some possible means of communication between the minds. The discovery ancient Upanisads, and the contemporary of the Essene scrolls has added urge to such scholarly approach. Mere dogmatic assertions in favour of a 'chosen people' or 'chosen faith' is no longer viewed by the scientific and interrogative man as the finality of judgment. In order to 'be' the best, it is no longer enough to die and

claim to be the best; but it is required to live in essence of reason and understanding, and by living to 'prove' to be the best.

Philosophy, to be effective through practice has to work through forms. Exciting forms, for appeasing the mystery of the supernatural, took the shape of superstition and mystic cults. But these cults had forms of their own; and the forms had run so deep into the social traditions that it has become very hard to be got rid of them. Force was tried, only to fail. Forced suppression of forms drive superstitious practices to the underworld of mystic magic and sorcery. Clandestine practices are no Cults and their forms sublimate answer for healthy spiritual pursuits. into religious forms when these get wedded to the vitality of philosophy, and metaphysics.

Just through a great piece of luck the Hindus were to be associated with the traditions of the Vedas and the Upanisads which emphasised so much on psychology, art of relaxation, transcendental meditation and the fundamental mechanism of the relation
of individual personalities with the Cosmic. This lucky tradition permitted the Vedic people, later, to accommodate many of the religious trends with a variety of gods without much ado. Restrictive opposition to beliefs leave contrary effects to social mind. A spirit of defiance to authority counteract the basic spirit of universal peace. This Aryan process of accommodative acceptance of the popular along with the knowledge of the Cosmic, made itpossible for the Vedic mind to merge philosophy and religion into one.

One of the forms of such interpretative acceptance of the ancient and traditional into the sophisticated Vedic culture was what is known to be Śaivism, the worship of Śiva, not only in the Linga form, but also in anthropological and Zoomorphic forms. Legends gained honoured places in myths; and the Siva tradition developed into a unique philosophy all its own.

The Three Branches of Saivism

This shall be studied now. Śaivism as a philosophy has been cultivated earnestly in Kashmir. It has its own interpretation and analyses, mainly Vedantic. Its emphasis on metaphysics has given it an esoteric obscurity which, when understood properly, reveals the intellectual subtlety and spiritual sublimation underlying most Hindu theological forms, but particularly the much maligned Śiva-worship.

The next study refers to the ancient Agama Literature of the Tamils. The emotional content of this form of Southern Saivism is overwhelming in piety and ecstasy. That does not mean that it has no roots in philosophical profundity. It follows a materialistic analysis of the concept of Siva, and leans principally on the Samkhya and the Yoga systems.

Apart from these two, there is a highly challenging revolutionary and reformative school of Saivism, known as the Jangama, or the Lingayata Sect, which, like the Siddhantins, accepts a materialistic approach to the analysis of the Sublime Cause of all events. This materialistic approach together with its spiritual content cuts through a rigidly guarded Vedic caste system, which had degenerated into the practice of denial of privileges to a vast section of the people, inclusive of women in general. Verses in the Manu Samhita on the status of women apropos of spiritual companionship provide ample testimony in justification of the revolutionary stand of the Jangamas. Prince Vasava was its leader. Such degradation of social and religious position of women was the general feature of the expanding patriarchal domination over such areas of culture where previously matriarchal leadership prevailed. Vasava's system of the Jangama Saivism laid the axe at the root of such encroachments of Brahmanical authority over privileges and disabilities. But all these three systems were, more or less, expressions of their times. Forces of history had been operative in bringing them to the fore.

Besides these three, there is also a variety of Tantric and tribal forms practised under the colourful umbrella of Saivism. The phallic overtones, naturally found in these forms cannot be denied. But these have remained all along, like witch-craft or Druid-

forms, the pursuit of an underground clandestine section of tribes and downright social degenerates.

A Reassessment of the Hindu Approach to Religion

In a remarkably frank passage Dr. Lewis acknowledges the possible gain that Western scholars could derive from a study of Eastern thoughts. "But however the relation of the finite self to Eternal Self is conceived, and whatever variations of emphasis we may find in the account given of the relation of the one to the other, and of degrees of reality accorded to finite things, the transcendent character of the absolute reality is always very clearly understood in a way that not only lends special interest to these early anticipations of later attempts to conceive the relation of the finite to the infinite, but which also proves exceptionally instructive to those who wish to consider the problem of transcendence as it presents today."3

The italics are mine. I want attention to be drawn to the two facts: one, the phrase 'early anticipation of later attempts'; and two, the phrase 'the problem of transcendence as it presents today'. I want attention to be drawn to the fact that in discovering the Ideal state of transcendence of experience, in discovering the metaphysical correlates of experience, cognition, perception and expression of the nature of Ultimate Reality, modern mind, with its empirical diversion and materialistic limitations, has not been able to surpass either the skill, or the conclusions of what these ancients in the East had been studiously, religiously and conscientiously arriving at with a dour and persistent application of self-analysis. To hold the 'self' in the 'I' as an object of analysis, and sublimate it to a subjective state, has been the greatest achievement of this process.

This approach to the discovery of Truth is known today as the famous 'Hindu approach'. Not too long ago it used to be a scholastic fashion to call it 'speculative, obscurantist and abstractionist'. Much circumvention and guile, a mountain of deliberate bluff and hoax were brought up by the application of 'studied' opinions to support such a view applied with political designs. As a justification of imperialistic expansionism, commercial exploitation, along with the egoistic self-approbation

contained in the phrase 'whiteman's-burden', such propagandist misrepresentations proved profitable. The over-enthusiastic evangelists only added more fuel to this fire by dumping all other religious forms as contrary to the True Religion. A new spirit of rededication amongst the Western scholars, specially amongst the regenerated post-war Universities, has succeeded in reallocating the ancient works of the forgotten authors, and reassessing their values. This reassessment has strikingly propagated an intellectual renaissance in the area of metaphysical and spiritual thought which has succeeded, in fact and form, in inaugurating a spirit of real ecumenism amongst the leading world religions, in spite of the embarrassment such scholarly honesty has been causing to some of the protagonists of evangelical and institutional religions, which thrive within anorganisational system of imperialistic bureaucracy. Because of the permissive wave of such democratically inspired sanctions a reassessment of sorcery and magic too is being made as religious studies.

Condemnation of the Siva-worship as a phallic trait and form is just one of those half-truths which are deliberately designed for misleading in the interest of a conversion. In fact such deliberate propaganda has been assisting a fast growth of empiricism, cynicism, hedonism, imperial- ism and commercial expansionism. By causing embarrassment to the gullible, it injects degeneration of faith. It is like brushing sugar to beet roots so that ants destroy everything. Such sententious generalisations, with conceited overtones of condemnation and spite, do not display ignorance alone, they also display something more injurious to the faculty of human understanding and judgement. It displays prejudice of opinion, scantiness of education, perpetuation of vanity, false pride in assumed superiority, misdirected zeal for self-love, and above all, a lamentable exposure of spiritual emptiness. This calamitous attitude could interest, or even profit, a few; but in the ultimate reckoning this deplorable lack of catholicity has shocked the post-war youths, who have discovered that one of the most important motives of Western patterns of religious propaganda has been to accumulate material gain to the establishment, even at the cost of truth and fair play. In this way the

established religions have come to suffer much more through their own weapons, which have misfired.

Fortunately, such dogmatic misunderstanding of the Universal Man and his spiritual aspirations, is now being effectively counteracted by scholars of comparative religion, whose objectivity of approach, and subjectivity of scholarship, is gradually succeeding to bring home to the deluded the fact that the spirit of the West has much to learn from the wisdom of the East, which has much to offer to the art of good living, and science of happiness, as laid down positively in their works, which have yet to be studied with an honesty of purpose. The study of comparative religion has been ably assisted by the progress of linguistics, the propagation of tests through translations, the discoveries of archaeology and the disabusement of the imperialistic possessiveness and political gangsterism.

With the spread of democracy and socialism, with the rise of the Common Man, the theory of the 'chosen nation' and the fraudulent idea of the 'whiteman's burden' is being

fast exposed. Man is getting busy now to reach the real religion of the soul, a religion for the society, a religion for the peace of man through a perennial philosophy. Such a religion has to rise above the man-made churches, well-stocked establishments, joints of internationally organised systems of brainwashings in the interest of an accumulative society, which are privileged to hold on the capitals of different nations, and above the dogmatic stand on mere revelationswhich stem from some Semetic antiquity. All of this has got to face today the intellectual enquiry of both empiricism and materialism. The religion of the dictator is giving way to the religion of experience, the religion of personal content. A personal god has been forced to get interpreted and represented in the light of personal experience. If this be called mysticism, it is decidedly going to be the future religion of the universal man.

Saivism and the 36 Tattvas

Towards this end, a study of Saivism has much to contribute, because in Savism whatever form emerges as concrete, or iconic, or symbolic, has been reasoned as a

projection of an inherent subjectivity into an objective expression. A study of Saivism is basically a study of the nature of Reality.

It is, in a sense, typical of the Hindu idea that religion, divinity, ritual and philosophy, nay, even life and after-life, must of need be linked in a single symphony. For the Hindu, philosophy and religion as well as religion and life are inseparable. The chain of ideas known together as 'Life' at the one end, and 'God the Unknown' at the other end, makes up man's world of form and spirit. The 'Bond', between the two, namely, the known and unknown world, is provided by 'Soul'. The Soul provides the force that links the world of matter with the world of spirit, otherwise known as Siva and Sakti respectively.

These three then, are the primary Constituents (Padarthas): God (Śiva), Bonds (Pasa) and the Soul (Atman).

These are to be studied in the light of the 36 principles, 4 (1) known as Tattvas (Tat=That and Tva-ism. Tat-tva-the 'Ism' of 'That', or more simply 'the final principle that makes That, That') Tattvas are active. They are principles that justify further emanations as evolutes from them, of which they become the causes.

The Tattvas remain firm, but Saiva metaphysics itself, as whole, has its variations. These range from idealistic monism, to pluralistic realism. The variance differs in accordance with the independence attributed to 'Soul' or 'Matter'.

In essence the exercise of determining the degree of interdependence of Soul and Matter is not speculative. Such an exercise has a purpose. is to get to know 'What is life for?' This knowledge leads This purpose to a freedom from the chain of 'cause and effect' 'sequence and consequence'. Without their freedom there is no peace. It is a

freedom from inhibition, tradition, reciprocation. Without peace, there is no happiness. Without attaining peace and happiness it is futile to try to serve others, and contribute to their peace and happiness. A perfectknowledge of the self alone leads to the perfection of peace and of peaceful service to the self, as well as to others. This

knowledge has to be experienced. Such experience is the fruit of meditation. Hence the quest of the nature of the soul that connects God with the World is vital for the Hindu thought: vital, positive and challenging.

Whereas the mechanics of meditation are supplied by the Yoga- system (discussed before), Śiva-Tattva alone leads to the perfect knowledge of the nature of Soul and Matter, and of the relation between the two.

Variations of the Śiva-Theme

The Saivic orthodox forms deal with the variations of this philosophy. The orthodox form of Saivism does not include the Pasupatas, Maha- vratas, Kāpālikas and Bhairavas, who are regarded by many as hateful and obnoxious. These are the Vama-Märgis-the followers of the 'contrary' way: contrary to the accepted orthodox way, which relate to the Systems. The Vāmas are really not as useless or as misguided. Truth of Reality might not be theirs, but they are very near to the proper destination. Like the Upanisads themselves, like the differences in Jainism, Buddhism, Christianity or Islam, some polemical differences in Saivism were inevitable. Schism is the inevitable after-growth and by-product of metaphysically oriented points of view, specially when such points of view, due to the external preconditions, of history, geography and culture, are inevitably influenced by local faith, prejudices and traditions. When such points of view are exposed to alienated areas of comprehension, when these had had to pass through long run of commonly held contrary opinions through ups and downs of historical shocks, several diversifications of a parent idea become almost inevitable over the centuries. Time alone has a dissolving influence. Such schismic diversifications of a central parent idea, therefore, have characterised even some of our comparatively modern religions. It is no wonder that Śaivism, which has been indirectly related to the most primitive of faiths, and which claims to be related to as ancient a tradition as the Vedas, if not to even earlier times, must have had several forms. Kashmir Saivism, known as Pratyabhijñā (Theory of Pratyabhijña

Experience), had Abhasavada (Luminism) and Spanda (Thrill), as its two cardinal lobes. The Trika (as, the three together is known) developed into a synthetic philosophy, on which the thought-currents of the ancient Aryan and pre-Islamic Atharvan traditions of Persia, Parthia and Bactria made deep influence. In its monistic emphasis it was a challenge to Samkhya, and favoured the Vedic. This was, of course, due to a cultural and geographical contiguity. The same syncretic reason accounts for the mysticism present in Kashmir-Saivism, which is felt through its metaphysical abstractions onthe one hand, and its physical and emotional symbolism on the other. This abstractionist symbolism, however, was not so emphatic in Southern Saivism known as Saiva Siddhanta and Vira-Saivism. Both of these, as off-shoots of the Agamas, believed in the dualistic emotional ecstasy of Bhakti. Both of these developed in the Southernmost part of India. As the earliest source available in Saivism we shall deal with the Agamas first.

Agamas: Sources and Propagation

Discussing about the sources of knowledge Rāmānuja considers that Aitihya or Traditions are dependable sources of knowledge, specially when the sages (of later times) vouch for their credibility from their respective experience. These are the Agamas; and when these are not supported by direct experience, and when these are mere products of feeling or inference, then they are known Agamābhāsa.

Agamas (although said to have been records of dialogues between Śiva and Śakti), are also reputed to have been put to practice by the great Vasudeva himself. As such the Vaisnava Agamas enjoy a prece- dence over the Saiva Agamas, which came later. But both support two points: both support Dualism in adoration; and both support admiration or Bhakti, and all that is associated with its practice, to be absolutely necessary for achieving the Parama-pada, or the highest state.

The Pallava king Rajasimhavarman leaves an inscriptional record in the Kailāśanatha temple of Canjeevaram, and mentions 28 Agamas, all of which refer to Siva (5th cent.

A.D.). Of these Kamika Agama is the most important. Tirumurai, a compilation of Saiva hymns by Tirumurai (1000 A.D.) is included amongst the Saiva literature. Thus between 500 and 1000 A.D. the Siva Agamas have been persistently referred to by the

Acaryas. The Agamas have indeed been quite ancient. Śaiva Siddhanta depends on both the sources of the Vedas and the Agamas. Nilakantha, a fourteenth century commentator on Brahma Sutra, undertook the task of reconciling both the Agama tradition and the Veda traditions in establishing the contents of the Siddhanta. Saiva saints and poets known as the Acaryas like Manikkavasagar, Sundarar, Nambi Andar, Nambi Sambandar and Appar together constitute the core of the exposi- tionists of the Agama traditions.

Some of the hymns of the Agama tradition have been collected in the appendix (q.v.). Even in translation the spiritual content of the emotional compositions are unmistakable.

But the earliest Upanisad which is considered to be the first document of the Vedic tradition in Saivism is the great Svetasvatara Upanisad. Without dealing with its contents at this place we propose to add in the appendix a comprehensive translation

of

Svetasvatara. To understandappropriately the spirit of Saivism a reading of this Upanisad is indis- pensable.

Two Types Saiva Agamas

The dualistic teachings of the emotive Agama literature was popular in the Tamil-lands; but Samkara preached his Advaita; and the Advaita Saivism found popularity in Kashmir, where it substituted the Agamic dualism. But in the South the fervent appeal of the Saiva hymnal treatises, the Tevaram and the Periya Puranam held the devotees' heart and soul. Soon it was able to attract the support of the Pallava Kings and the Chola Kings, through whose mighty empire Saivism spread beyond the seas to Indo-China and Malaya and Eastern archipelago. Since the sixth century Saivism enjoyed a rare patronage which completely eliminated the influences of the godless Buddhists.

Saiva Siddhanta was a much later development (13th and 14th cents.). In 1160 Vasava, the Brahmin Minister of the Chola King Bijjala, took up the traditions of an obscure form of Saivic rites popular amongst some of the tribes, and gave it an intellectual basis for expounding a very reformative and revolutionary form of Saivism known as Vira Saivism. This form of Saivism was responsible for driving away the influences of Jainism and Buddhism from the deep South and the Kannada districts. Because of the Athanasian variety of strict moral code followed by Vasava many relate his movement to the Egyptian influence. But of that, later on.

Besides the Agamas there are several Upapurānas which have contri- buted to the Siva-literature. Sivapurana, Saurapurana, Sivadharma, Sivadharmottara, Sivarahasya, Ekamrapurana, Parasara-Upapurana, Vasistha- Lainga-Upapurana, Vikhyada-Purana, etc., etc., are the later Upapurānas on which the history of Saivism has to rely. But the most important docu- ment in this category is the Vayu Purāna. Besides being one of the most early Puranas, the Vayu has the distinction of being the least inter- polated of the Purāṇas. On this Purana Saivas have to depend the most (besides the Svetasvatara Upanisad) for their references in the strictly Brāhmaṇical canonisation of the Vedic Rudra into the popular Śiva, who as the co-partner of Sakti contained the ancient and the modern, the past and the present, the Vedic and the tribal, the Yogic and the ritualistic into one system, the Saiva system.

Other Sources

Who were the original compilers of the Purana form? Some say the Ksatriyas, and others say, the Brahmanas. The Kṣatriya supporters mention that Lomaharṣaṇa, a Sûta, and so a Kṣatriya, has been thenarrator of most of the Purānas. But was Lomaharṣaṇa a composer, or merely the transmitter? Bṛhaddevata mentions the custom of reciting Mantras, and the history of the Mantras formed an imperative part of the Brahmanical Yajñas; and the reciters were invariably the Brahma- nas. There is little doubt about the fact that many of the Purāṇas contained in the Brahmana such

texts as were inherited by the Vedic This view is amply supported by the priests from the ancient ancestors. Brahmana texts, which abound with incidents and anecdotes which provided the germs for the future growth of the Purāṇas. But there is little doubt that the Suta, as a royal chronicler, and enjoying a position in the court only next to a ruling monarch's brother, as a friend and accompanying hero, was the accepted
authority for any type of historical reference, ancient or current. Satapatha Brāhmaṇa, Yajur Veda and Pañcavimśata Brāhmaṇa support this view. This is the reason why Atharva Veda, and Bṛhadaranyaka Upanisad, both of which were later authorities, gave to the Puranas as holy a position as the Vedas. Between 600 and 300 B.G., when Apastamba had ended his life, the Puranas, or the better part of them, had been in
vogue, because we find the Purāṇas quoted in the Apastamba Dharmasûtra.

But we are concerned with the Vayu and the Siva Purāṇas, of which the former one is much the earlier. The Vayu is one of the most ancient of the Puranas. Vayu, the Wind, was no Purana-Deity. He could not be given any form. The flag alone, which moved, proved his objective emblem. How Vayu as a Vedic god was being gradually replaced by formed deities like Śiva, Visnu and Agni, principally occupies the space in this Purana. It marked the bridge between the Vedic and the Paurāṇic cultures. The social cause why the new form of literature known as the Purāṇas at all came into being supports our previous views regarding the changing Vedic and Brahmanical society in India. These changes, we said, were due to (a) the rise of the heretical Jainist and Buddhist forms, and (b) the periodical insurge of non-Indian Aryan and non-Aryan races into the cultural body of India. Brāhmaṇical systems had been fading away against foreign impacts. Moreover, the post-Buddha social conditions did not give back to the Brāhmaṇical domination the power it had once enjoyed. The new trends were more permissive, and the entire arrangement of Vedic caste-division was in jeopardy. New Smṛtis, Purānas, Grhya Sûtras attempted to lay down further rigidities, but had to evolve a thousand ways through which the powerful foreign trends, most of

them supported by the force of arms, could be accommodated, up to a point! Thus came the time of the complex mosaic of the caste zig-zags, and their tenuous connections with heredity. All of it concerned 'purity of blood'; the criterion of Guna and Prarabdha (Karma) had become obsolete.

"Besides the staunch followers of the religious systems, there was another considerable class of people who were rather of a mixed type with a synthetic attitude of mind."4a This was the time also for the emergence of a thousand deities, for whom passages and chapters were being incorporated within the body of the Puranas; even new Purāṇas were being written; and a number of Upapurānas came into being, all dedicated to the task of establishing such gods and goddesses who could displace the Vedic gods, and make room for them. On the one hand these sec- tarian deities received the highest homage through the Bhakti system, and on the other hand the systems of Samkhya and Vedanta were also upheld with utmost vigour. This accounts not only for the Tevaram, the Agama and the Pañcarātra literature, but also for the complex abstractions of the intellectual hair-splittings of Samkara, Rāmānuja, Vallabha and Madhava on the one hand, and Vasugupta, Bhaskara, Kṣemaraja and Abhinava- gupta on the other.

The rise of the other systems and forms proved fatal to the Brahmanical system. The Vedic works of the time, up to the time of Manu, envisage this gradual decay until the Vedic Yajñas were completely pushed out by the more permissive Agamic ways. This was the Bhakti way.

"The various sects and systems of religion created an atmosphere which did not in an orthodox way conform to Vedic or Brāhmaṇical ideals. This atmosphere was further disturbed by the advent of casteless foreigners such as the Greeks, Śakas, Palhavas, Kuṣaṇas, and Abhiras, who founded extensive kingdoms and settled in this country. Though these foreigners accepted Buddhism, Saivism or Vaisnavism and were soon Indianised, there non-Brāhmaṇic manners and customs could not but influence the people, specially their brothers in faith. Most of these alien tribes being originally

nomadic, can be expected to have had a variable standard of morality which must have affected the people living around them."4b The social fabric must have been seriously disturbed to the very roots; and the new faiths which accommodated the emotive trends, and accepted some of the forms of image worship, alone by their liberal interpretation of the Sastras and the Vedas kept alive the ancient Sanatana system of the Vedas. The Agamas are thus saturated with Bhakti; but they also retain within their emotive language some of the spiritual sublimi- ties which Yoga and Vedanta aim at.

The devotee's place, apropos of the deity, was as secured as the Brāhmaṇical sage well-versed in the Vedic rites.

Vayu Purāna gives a rather detailed indication about this change. This basic book on Saivism refers both to the Mahabharata and Hari- vamsa; although some of its chapters were added later, mainly this Purana keeps its form intact. In the beginning of the 7th cent. it was a popular source for the Pasupatas. Vayu, Brahma, and MärkandeyaPurānas deal with Siva and Sakti worship.

Agama Rites

The Agamas have been divided into three classes. These are the Vaisnava, the Sakta and the Saiva. In this way they between them accommodate the Vedas and the Tantras. This accommodation is the greatest contribution of the Agamas. The next contribution is, of course, its Bhakti spirit, which brings within the Hindu fold all the people, caste as well as non-caste. Considering that individuals are conducted by their innate Gunas, the Agamas make room for all types. Any individual could follow the Agamic way.

Agamic rites believe in the stages of Patanjali. Thus Yama, Niyama, Asana, Prāṇāyāma, Pratyāhāra, Dhyana, Dharaṇa are prescribed to reach Samadhi or Tadgati. The names differ at times, like Sila and Acara, Sevä and Ārati, Salokya, Samipya, Sarûpya, Sayujya and Tadgati. But the structure on the whole remains intact. Agamas however, recommend the Vigraha (Image), either in the iconic forms

(Salagrama: Śiva Linga) or in the anthropomorphic form; and they also recommend a complete dedication to these Vigrahas as a part and parcel of the self.

Śalagrama is the Arûpa (abstract) aspect of the Deity; and its Sarûpa (Image) aspect is represented by the image of Visnu in the Anantaśayana Mûrti. We have not to concern with this murti now. We have to deal with the Śiva images as divined by the Dhyana (Spiritual insight) of the Agamic sages. The Arûpa Siva image is, of course, the Linga-murti, and its Sarûpa Mûrti is Tamomaya (Dark) Śiva consorting with Sakti. Śiva represents here the Yogi form. He is very popular with the Yogis, for whom He is Işta Devata; and the five-lettered Namah Sivaya is the Mantra form of this concept. Thus for

the Agamas the Sattva in Mûrti (Image) is Visṇu; the Tamas in Mûrti is Siva; and the Rajas in Mûrti is Prakṛti, Durgā, Uma or Mahiṣamardini. The forms this Agama worship takes are known as Japa (chantings), Homa (Fire offerings); and Tarpana (worship with water, flower, food, etc.). Śiva Japa is: 'Namah Sivaya'; Visṇu Japa is: 'Namo Nārāyaṇāya'; and Sakti Japa is: 'Ka Ai La Hrim, Ha Sa Ka Ha La Hrim, Sa Ka La Hrim'. Together with Präṇāyāma this is the Mantra-japa which leads to Siddhi (final success). Homa, which is reminiscent of the Vedic sacrifice, is done by offering 'ghee' in fire. Except in the case of Ganapati-worship it is very rare to do Homa in the course of Agama Vidhi. The last, Tarpana form is the most popular with the temple devotees. They offer flower, water, incense, lamps and anything else for food. This is the general pattern followed in all the Hindu temples; and this, of course, shows a large deviation from the early Vedic rites. All this isAgama.

Samkara explains these offerings in the following manner: Puruşa, the all pervading, himself is Bhāgavata (that is to say that the immanent essence of totality is itself congealed into the deity-form), the unqualified in the qualified form. Hence the image or the Vigraha is fit to be wor- shipped. In fact, at the time of the actual worship the worshipper conceives himself as the deity; without conceiving of this oneness there is

no symphonical harmony created for offering an object to an object. Subjectivity alone could lead to the absolute.

Before finishing the topic on Agamas let us indulge in a rather long quotation from Dr. Hajra:

"Men may be grouped into three classes: those in whom the faculty of intellect and reasoning is dominant; those in whom emotion plays the highest role; and those that are controlled by their impulses and instincts. To those who belong to the first group, abstract thinking is easy, and they find satisfaction only in rational philosophy. This class is, naturally, a small group. For them ritualistic ceremonial religion is not suited; in other words, the members of this group are not Adhikarins (competents) for ritualistic religions. The last group is composed of children and those with childish mentality. They cannot think; nor are their emotions developed. They can be trained to follow a routine which, in due course, may help them to enjoy a form of vegetative satisfaction, to borrow a term from biology. As children grow up, and acquire emotional factors and capacity to think, the permanent members of this group are few and limited to those of lower mental capacity. The bulk of humanity lies between these two, forming the second or the intermediary group. In them emotion predominates;
they are also capable of abstract thinking, but to a limited extent; and most of them would also require material and mechanical measures to stimulate their emotions to the
desired strength. Bhakti Märga or the emotional way of realisation of God is for them. And Agama ritualism is designed to satisfy the needs of this class. The most important thing to understand in Hinduism is that everything taught there is not intended for everybody; there is no definite question of suitability, or Adhikari Bhāva. The greatness of Hinduism lies in the fact that it supplies forms, methods, and measures to suit all possible types of men."4c

It is remarkable that Saivism in Kashmir, as well as in the Deccan claims to derive its authority from the Agamas. Both the forms claim the Agamas as being independent of the Vedas.

The Agamas which are said to have been propagated by Vasudeva,are also claimed to have been revealed by Siva (the Father) to Śiva (the Mother), or vice versa. As such, these are texts revealed to seers directly from the Godhead. In other words their authority is derived from inspirational experience, and no other. It is remarkable that the laws are recorded in the form of a dialogue. Most records that different prophets have left, follow this form. Plato's dialogues, although not pro- phetic or mystic, follow this convention. The Bible makes use of such phrases as, "and the Lord said unto Moses, 'Thou shalt not'," etc.; so in the Buddhist texts,-"The Lord spake". In the Buddhist texts or in Plato's dialogues or in Srimad Bhagvad Gita, it was a physical being who was held responsible for talking to another, who for the time being was inspirationally attuned. "Thus Spake Zarathustra" has become a familiar phrase, thanks to Nietzche. That accounts for Zoroastrianism. The chronicler attempted, thereby, to maintain a glimpse of some historical perspective. Mystically explained, such texts of 'Revealed Utterances' hold much of the Mystic Truths. The Revealer reveals what is beyond personal training and education. Unless spiritually inspired in content and form the compositions of the Revelations bear no logic with the mental preparation of their authors. Such revelations are only plausible in the mystic sense. The Vedas are known to have recorded truths as 'Realised' by the 'Author-Seer'. They are not composed by skillful authorship; but by the virtue of transcendental transmission of sublime truths. In perfection of forms and content they appear to be beyond human achievement.

Hence the Vedas are celebrated as Apauruşeya, trans-corporated, 'Realised'. Hence, they are known as the 'Vedas', i.e., Truths Realised. Revealed Texts are not peculiar to the Vedic traditions. All religious scriptures more or less claim 'Revealed' inspirations. Some of these, like the Vedas, are said to be directed without any intervention. Some, like the Koran or the Mosaic Laws, have come to us through a specially chosen

intermediary. Yet some others have been recorded as dialogues. The recorded texts of the Buddha-canon, the new Testaments belong to the last category.

The Puranas and the Agamas have basically followed this method. Such is also the pattern followed by the Epics, the Mahabharata and the Rāmāyaṇa. All of these are 'narrated' texts. The peculiarity of the Agamas, as distinct from the Purānas and the great Epics, is that the dialogue in the Agamas are contained between Siva and His Consort Pārvati (Śiva) Herself. It is a dialogue between the Positive and Negative aspects of complete knowledge, a Female-Male team to produce a totality. Therefore, in a sense, the Agamas could be described as the Revealed Texts of the first category. Revealed as they are, the Siddhantins try to relate the Agamas to the Vedic text. This gives the Agamas the addedvalues of reconcilement, and authoritative verification. The Siddhantins accept the Vedas as authority. The Trika finds the Agamas quite enough for their own reference.

The Agamas are traditionally referred to the Sangam Age in Tamil literature which go back to a hoary past. Historically, however, the age has been fixed by Dr. V. R. R. Dikshitar and Dr. M. A. Mehendale as ranging between 500 B.C. and 500 A.D. But there are strong opinions in favour of placing the earliest Sangam, in the available forms at about 3000 B.C. at the least. The present available forms, of course, are much later in date than the tradition they record. In any case the origin of the Sangam, whether viewed traditionally or historically favours independent growth without disowning Vedic contacts. How far independent it is, is to be examined.

Adiyars, Tevarams and Acaryas

The origins of the Agamas, and therefore of Saivism, relate to the Dravids and Tamils of the Deccan. The earliest development of Saivism is traced to the Adiyars and the Acaryas. The sixty-three canonical saints, known as the Adiyars, illustrated by their writings the spiritual distinctions of Saivism. The first four saints composed Siva-hymns known as Tevarams, emotionally inspired, spiritually sustained, and universally

appreciated as poems of a sublime content. The Tevaram is considered to be the honoured treasure of the Saivic texts. But the Philosophical sub- stances of Saivism were expounded later by the Acaryas or teachers such as Moykanda-deva, Arundi-Śivacārya, Maraujñam-Sambandha and Umapati Sivācārya. The exposition of the Siddhanta system principally rests with them.

Siddhanta

As in the case of the Agamas, here we take a quick glance at the other orthodox form of Saivism: the Siddhanta. We will reserve for a later chapter a more elaborate treatment of the Agama metaphysics.

Saiva Siddhanta is categorised into three principal concepts of Pati (Lord), Pasa (Rope or string for trapping) and Pasu (animal). Pati is the Lord, the Ultimate Reality; perfecting knowledge; Paśu is the material being; Pasa is the ignorance of the material being, because it ties it, as in a trap, to the unreal, so that the Pati is deprived of its real consciousness to feel one with the cosmic consciousness.

The Siddhantins simplify the problem itself in order to provide a simple solution. The problem is reduced to extreme simplicity. Beings given, a source or a Primal Cause of the being becomes incontrovertiblyimperative. The Primal Cause in this way becomes the Primal Origin of Beings. Why then is there any difficulty to know the nature of Primal Origin? Why and how is the 'Being' kept so disengaged from its source when it is so difficult to recall and remember our pre-natal state? When does such an exercise appear to be even irrelevant and inconsequential? Why the Cause of Creation is not obvious? In other words, why does the cause of 'Being' appear to suffer from an inertia, as it were, in its attempts to relate its existence, and the purpose of existence, to the cause of its existence? Unless the cause of 'Being' is appreciated, the purpose of 'Being' cannot be comprehended. An uncomprehended continuity of existence is no better than a blindman's buff sort of living. Whereas such a state of impotent acceptance could be imagined in inert beings, in conscious beings the same state would

indicate a depraved state of inertia, an innate indisposition to knowledge, or Tamas. It is this Tamas (Darkness, as opposed to Light, which is Sattva) which, as ignorance, creates dullness, drabness, inertia to intellect and will. Consciousness, which by nature should be crystal-clear, confronts a false cover. It is reduced to an opaque state through which light cannot penetrate. Hence it becomes imperative for the cultivation of knowledge to dispel this Tamas. Such a complex state of confusion in consciousness is created by these attachments and ties keep bound to surrounding objects through artificial correlates. It binds the apparent to the apparent; and keeps the fundamental away. Gradually the mind, accustomed to the torpor, does not even bother to seek the fundamental. Ignorance and false attachments, together, form 'the Bonds' or the Pasa. Therefore, the only reasonable way out is to cut away the Bonds. The Vedas say Pasan-s- chindhi (cut the traps).

The Pati, Pāśa and Paśu, a triumvirate, make the Siddhanta a philosophy of pluralistic realism. 'Hara' is the way to reach the first Cause of Beings, i.e., Śiva. 'Hara' means 'remove'. The Hara-way is the way of the removal of Pāśa, or ignorance. Without Hara's favour, and without cutting the trap, the removal of ignorance is impossible.
All beings are results of 'Anu' or atom, a product of pure energy and impure inactivity, i.e., gross matter. Streams of these impurities as 'āṇavamala', atomic impurities, spiritually polluted substances, appear as 'beings'. (Students of nuclear physics would discover the underlying truth of this stand in the process of discovering the origin of matter). 'Hara' which means 'remove' or 'make disappear', is invoked with the prayer

of
removing the impurities of beings, so that pure energy, the Real-Cause in its essence, is realised. Thus 'Hara' becomes the Primal Cause.

Pasa: Obstructions

The essence of perceiving this Primal Cause supersedes all effects. This is Hara, Siva, the Lord or God. He is the creator in the sense that in relation to all that is created, the concept of a creator suggests itself automatically and irresistibly. Human

understanding is limited to personal capacity, which in its turn is related to experience, which, to begin with, is naturally limited. Yet the fact is that by nature human capacity is unlimited. The potential limitlessness of human capacity becomes limited in individuals in accordance with the person's innate unique individualism which is formed by the proportion of the 'Gunas' inherent in the beings. These impose restrictions on different strata of personality -the personality that naturally seeks purity and peace, yet gets not; the personality that lies apathetic, and refuses, and thereby learns not, because it remains ignorant on account of the inertia acquired through disguise. As a result, mind remains unreceptive and impenetrable. These three-in-one feature of each personality, i.e., the personality that remains unreceptive is the chief distinguishing characteristic of all matter-in-being, from a grain to a star, from an idiot to a seer. In proportion to the level of consciousness attained through a purposive effort, and through one's application towards winning the objective, each being differs from another. Consciousness is the one enveloping expression of the Supreme Cause; and in proportion to its 'Will' to awake or not to awake, does it indicate its purity of substance. Freedom from the Bonds depends on elimination of the Gunas. Gunas could be eliminated by a Free-Will alone.

Gunas

What then are the Gunas? We had occasion to explain the Gunas casually in another context. But the concept calls for more clarification. Guna is Will's Modes of progress, ranging from Light to Darkness. All substance has a pure state; an impure state; and a state where pure and impure are in a state of flux. The pure is Sattva; the impure is Tamas: and the intermediary state in flux is Rajas. The most enlightened of these bonds is Sattva, which leads to perfect peace and bliss. The ever- striving, agitating, unpeaceful state of personality is due to Rajas; and the unagitating slothful ignorant state of personality is due to Tamas. All personalities have been categorised into three divisions according to the volitional impetus inherent in the nature of the being. In this way one category is called spiritual (a category attainable by human consciousness alone); the second category is mundane (a category that involves all beings having

life); and the third category is ignorant (a categorywhere effortlessness is the chief characteristic). Sattva is Progress; Rajas is Activity; Tamas is Retardation or Regress. Sattva, Rajas and Tamas are the 'bonds' (Gunas) that keep the Pati, the Supreme, away from an individual's full realisation. Hara removes the bonds, by removing the impurities. In order to have a full experience of a beatific realisation one must exceed even the bond of Sattva.

We have been talking in terms of the Cause, and the Caused. We have to, because of the limitations of the human language and power of comprehension. Though we are talking of the Cause and the Caused as two, yet it is defective to consider Śiva, the Caused, and Sakti, the Primal There is no duality. The Cause as two. In reality these are not two. Cause and the Caused in the final analysis are but two in conceptual classification alone. It is so termed in the interest of conceptual facility. (The two are really one, like the Moon and the moonlight.) Human concepts, too, are limited by Gunas, to begin with. Till all impurities are removed the Oneness of the two could not be entirely realised. So long as we cannot penetrate that area, we have only to talk; and as long as we talk, we have to talk in terms of 'More-than-one'. The One is to be Realised and cannot be talked of. Till it is realised, one has got to talk about it in human language.

Realisation of bliss (Anandam) is an experience beyond the scope of speech. The realised actually experiences this linguistic duality just as one single experience. The Yogî Seer Ramakrishna illustrates the point by a gram-seed. The two halves of the seed are enclosed as one within the shell. The shell is Maya. It is, and is not in the sense that the 'two' within is, and is not; because the 'Two' are really One. The 'Life' of the seed, i.e., its generative substance and principle, is sustained by the apparent two-ness of the Real One, which is enveloped within a shell. The shell is Māyā (Because it is due to the cover of the shell that the two halves appear as, two, and hide the face of oneness); the two halves are Śiva's static state; Śiva, unnoticed, activises the generative property enveloped by the two lobes. The entire underlying principle of this

unified activity is the Prapanca (the manifest world form). One emanates from, and stays in the other at the same time. It is both inactive and active, for such is the nature of matter, in its final analysis, that in it both activity and inactivity are inherent. Activity is potentially dormant in matter, yet its mutative cycle of change is operative. Look at the 'lobes' of the gram; inactive. Look at the sprouting gram, active. Nuclear physics, too, while defining the relation of electrons to protons, emphasises the conceptual existence with reference to atom. The final explanation is still mute to science.

Hermaphrodites: Ardhanarisvara

The two aspects of activity, active-activity and inactive-activity are known popularly as negative and positive respectively. Mathematics accepts the Negative as much a quantity as the Positive. This in meta- physical concept is termed as Sakti and Siva respectively, so the same two aspects again for the convenience of the limited power of human concept, are also known as female and male; but only as concepts, not as genders as we know them in the empirical sense. Therefore the Saiva Siddhantins have evolved the half-male, half-female (or, half-Śiva and half-Viṣnu) iconographical representation of this idea in the celebrated, or else much abused, 'half-male half-female' (Ardhanari'svara) image (see Plates 38, 41). Thus the Primal Cause is a composite concept of Power and Form. It is significant that in Sanskrt the word Siva could be used as masculine, feminine, or neuter gender. The 'Cause' is 'It-She-He' all combined. No single gender is assignable to it. Concepts are abstract, and have no gender. For adoration alone such concepts are reduced to Image forms. Some choose a Father-image; some a Mother. This again depends on the matriarchal or patriarchal culture-form. We have discussed this in the first chapter and in the chapter on the Mother. Thus a Great Agama sage says, "Behold; the male, the female and the neuter in One image." We are told that in nuclear physics too an atom-structure is a composite of electron-proton-neutron. This abstract concept is the very antipodes and antethesis of the primitive fertility cult of which Phal- licism is an expression; and

which is mistakenly confused with Saivism. Hindu metaphysics, may this be remembered, throughout its long tradition maintains this concept of 'two-in-one' as a treasured postulate.5 The images, to illustrate idealistically this postulate, are also idealistic, as has been shown in our plate. Such images are quite distinct from the realistic (physically erotic) images sculptored during the Greek and Roman times, at least one of which is a treasured specimen preserved in the Louvre, Paris.

So far about the bi-sexual image. What about the three-in-one images so high-lighted in the photographed expressions from Ellora, Elephanta and other ancient Saiva shrines?

Three-in-One

As in the case of the two-in-one Ardhanariśvara, so the concept of the three-in-one image, the Trimurti, has provoked minds unused to Hindu images, and led them to regard these as grotesque phantasmagoria. Of all types of fanaticism that of the conceited-wise is the most detrimental to clear thinking. The concept of Ardhanariśvara represents the conceptof the emergence of Being from the Matter-Energy state of evolution; and the concept of Trimurti represents the functional aspect of the matter in relation to being. Of course, this concept of finding in one body the cause of the matter, the caused in the matter and the neutral witness, reminds one of the symbols that the physicist uses like, +,- and 0, which indicate proton, electron and neutron. The Atom is the first 'Being' in the material world. It contains properties of (a) the energy energised, and abides by the law of functioning; (b) the actor, the acted and the witness; (c) creativity, stability and the neutral blank; and (d) the beginning, the middle, and the end (where the end and the beginning meet at a neutral point). This concept of matter, or atom is found symbo- This Trimurti lised in the image-representation known as Trimurti. is known as the aspects of Srsti, Sthiti, and Pralaya, represented by images known as Brahma, Visnu and Siva. No one is a unit without the other two. It is an imaged statement of the cyclic functioning of the Life-force within the World phenomenon. The functional energy which assumes different expressions,

with different effects permeates and sur- charges the cosmic egg (Brahmanda) floating in an ocean of conscious Will. Due to the indeterminate imbalance of the gunas, evolutes assume different expressions, with different effects and consequences. Yet cosmically speaking all this, together, is a Whole, Brahmanda. Lest the variegated aspects of functional expressions delude the mind, and take the variations as different, the three-in-one form (Trimurti) images the idea in concrete shape. These functions are (a) emergence, (b) progress, and (c) disintegration; in other words, Creation, Sustenance and Dissolu- tion. Throughout, the entire process is one of Mutation, which disinte- grates to integrate. Lest by any chance-misconception the three are taken as three different units, and not as aspects of one single unit, as a precautionary measure, the three are put together into one figure. This is the Trimurti. It is adored as the manifestation of the true Rudra, the Red one, the terrible one (the hot heat of disintegration). He is not really so terrible, if one considers it entirely. "Rudra is truly one, for the knower of Brahma does not admit the existence of a second. He dwells as the inner Self of every being. After having created all the worlds, He, their Protector, takes them back into Himself at the end of Time."6

Thus, bonds do not bind the Supreme. He is freedom of bliss itself. So Siva is unbonded (Nirguna), free of impurities (Nirmala), beyond all 'that' (Tatpara) and incomparable (Asāmānya). Siva cannot be des- cribed by language (anirvacanîya). In the field of consciousness he neither is the awakened state (Jagrat), nor the dream state

(Svapna), nor the sleeping state (Suşupti). He is the fourth state, the sublime (para) state, the Beyond (turiya) state. We note here that the Siddhanta concept of Siva, the Brahma concept of the Vedanta, the Puruşa of Samkhya almostconvey one and the same idea as Plato, Socrates or Pythagoras attempted to mean. As such Saivism is the extreme of Idealistic realism. It is a blunder to equate it with any cult, and the least with the fertility cult, or phallicism.

(a) The Spiritual Eight

Included in the Siva concept of Siddhanta is the graduated concept of spiritual attributes. "Having no sense organs it is unaffected by the bonds cast by senses." These attributes are eight: independence, purity, self knowledge, omniscience, freedom from impurities (mala), boundless benevolence, omnipotence, and bliss. He is Cit: Sat, i.e. a concept of reality which is entirely conscious. As such part-consciousness, or fettered consciousness cannot be fully aware of it, in the sense that pure consciousness is just one stream, one field, one overwhelming experience. Siva is totality. It is not a fraction.

(b) The Perceptual Eight

Śiva or Pati is both immanent and transcendent. His transcendental aspects have been described above. His immanent aspects, which are altogether expressed in eight perceptual forms, are as follows: Earth, Water, Air, Fire, Sky, Sun, the Moon and the Sentient man. This group of eight, together with the previous group of eight, make eight an esoteric numerical in Saivism. Thus Śiva is known as the eight-formed one, or the eight-in-one (Aṣṭamûrti) which sometime is iconographically represented as one with eight heads, or eight hands.

Aṣṭa (eight) Vajras (weapons) are to be united for emancipation. (cf., the legend of the liberation of Aśvini in the Dandiparvam, an appendix to the Mahabharata.) Asta (eight) Dhatus (metals) are melted to mould a metal statue of Siva, or of Sakti, as Kalî or Durgā. The Yoga system is known to have eight parts, Aṣṭānga Yoga.

The Five Principles

Śiva has been described as having the three functions of integration, sustenance and disintegration. Whereas this is true about the conceptual and transcendental world, in the immanent world two more functions complete the correlates between the transcendental and the immanent. These are functions of Grace and Obscurity, i.e., Expression and non- Expression of Grace; Grace-descending, and Grace withheld.

The Saiva concept of Grace might very well bear comparison with the later evolution of the concept amongst the Essines and the Christians. What would remain of Christianity once the concept of Grace is takenaway from it? The great and original contribution that Jesus made over and above the doctrine of John the Baptist was the freshness of his concept of Grace and Love: Yet, Grace as a divine immanent concept has been the original contribution of the Saivas. It is not in vain, really that there exists amongst some of the sects of important and orthodox Hindu ascetics a fond faith that Jesus Christ as a disciple of John the Baptist was a living example of a Saiva Brahmacarî Sannyasî, i.e., an ascetic mendicant, who was an indisputable and illustrious example of mind over body, as well as of the Saiva-Principle of Grace. Egypt and the Egyptians were very conversant with a similar creed as we will see.

Blessed art thou, O Lord, God of mercy and abundant Grace,

For thou hast made known Thy wisdom to me

That I should recount Thy marvellous deeds,

Keeping silence neither by day nor by night : For I have trusted in thy Grace.

In thy great goodness.

(Hymn from Dead Sea Scrolls-C. Vermes-Pelican, p. 16.)

Philosophically the Siddhantins consider 'Existence distinct from Sakti' in the same manner as they consider 'Existence distinct from consciousness'; or Sat distinct from Git. Śaiva Siddhanta speaks of Siva, the Pati, having the five functions of obscuration (Tirodhāna), creation (Sṛşti), preservation (Sthiti), destructions (Samhāra) and grace (Anu- graha). Hence Siva image has five faces representing Five Facets. We shall elaborate on these a little later. To realise the facets let us recall that the same gracious sun that causes the blossoms to bloom and sets aglow the countryside with splashes of colours is also responsible for the decay of the thousand other petals that drop and die.

As flowers they die, but as fruit they preserve the seed of the life-cycle. Life's very

growth is a guarantee for its race towards the end. He, who considers these as two different functions, is confused. He is ever and ever merged in a Buddhistic melancholy of suffering and sorrow. Happiness or peace is his who regards these as

the aspects of the one and the same Grace. It is Śiva that unmoved moves all; remaining unaltered, presides over all alterations; remaining unaffected, witnesses all affections. Such is the nature of the Absolute Truth and Reality that is Śiva.

Incarnation

Therefore, it stands to reason that Siddhantins insist that Śiva could not be subjected to the rigours and humiliations of birth and death in the worldly way. Śiva is not born to die, or is not subject to alter with thealterations of time. Hence reincarnation cannot happen to Śiva. Although reincarnation is ruled out in Saivism, so far as Siva is concerned, it is however held to be possible for a Saiva mystic to realise Śiva in any particular form in which the devotee is accustomed to have thought of Him. Such mystical transfiguration is not unknown to spiritual history. It is a case of the cosmic consciousness crystallizing before the perceptual apprehension of the realised being. Transfiguration is not to be confused with incarnation. God cannot be subjected to birth and death, although Godliness could assume a transfigured state with respect to the sub- limated. The perceptual capacity of a Dhruva, a Dattatreya, a St. John on the Cross, or a St. Bernadette enjoyed much more awareness. This was due to their spiritual personality. Siva appears to the mystic devout as and when the intense demand of the soul makes transfigurations irresistible; but the particular form that Siva would then assume, would depend on the habitual form in which He had been conceived of by the inner spirit of the devotees. "God does not take the body in the way a trans- migrating soul does. This does not mean that God does not appear in bodily form. He does assume the form in which he is worshipped by His devotee and also in the forms that are required to save the soul. But all such forms are not made of matter; they are the expressions of His Grace.""

Speaking of incarnations, Śiva-philosophers regard the transcendentalised in flesh as an incarnation. This preference is inspired by the sense that Grace has davned on a person in its fullness. Such a person is an ascended being, a Saint. The ascension of Jesus, regarded in this ethereal and cosmically unified state is an honoured faith amongst very many Hindu devouts. Such an assumption enjoys, however, a traditional mystic support.

Apart from the incarnation of Spirit into form, the Saiva ascetics in general take pleasure in assuming all possible physical embellishments that distinguish Siva from other Vedic gods. There is a sect in India known as the Nathas who bear, or try to bear, all the embellishments of Siva on their bodies. Besides them, ascetics in general, whose ideal is Śiva, are known for using skin of animals as wear, straw-strings as belts, a trident or a spear as staff, a shell or a simple bowl as their only vessel. They wear matted locks; smear their bodies with ash; speak in a high voice; assume rough and ready ways; and honour abstentions from passionate sensuous behaviour. They seek solitude; eat vegetarian food; avoid contacts and congregations, and keep to the woods.

The Pasu

The next important link of the Saiva Siddhanta is the Paśu, i.e., the 'being' itself. What or who is this 'Being'? A passionate, emotional,limited, qualified identity, known as an individual. This individual is identified, recognised, given a name and a class or category. The factors on which these distinctive differentials depend are many and various. Ultimately by this process the One appears to be many. But it is a delu- sion. All really, are the variants of the One real. As such, the distinctions are due to an obvious delusion of mind; it gives rise to an illusion in concept. It results in an irresistible mental projection which by its nature is unsteady and ever shifting. It is called Mäyä, which we have discussed in the previous chapter under Vedanta.8

Maya and Visrsti

Māyā, too, is a cause, as there is a cause to a mirage. The cause of the mirage is enrooted in a principle which is more real than the mirage. The same mirage is not the same from two different points, at two different times, if seen by two different persons. But the cause of the mirage re- mains the same. According to the theory of

Satkāryavāda of the Siddhan- tins, Māyā is the material cause of the Universe. It creates an illusion of many-ness, when really there are not many."

Materially, the many and their distinctive attributes, are caused from Māyā, because Śiva-Sakti is the primal-absolute-spiritual cause. God alone is intelligent. Therefore, a non-intelligent cause is being postulated by the word 'Māyā' which etymologically means 'resolved into it, and evolved from it'. Māyā gives more than a body to the soul; it gives also the instruments to the body, so that the body might function. These instruments are the active organs. Māyā gives the body environs, so that body's existence is relatively realised. Māyā gives to bodies other bodies, and makes the two sets reciprocally inter-dependent as objects enjoying objects, and subjects that make objects enjoy. Enjoyment adds zeal to bodies and senses, so that they function more, desire more, get more and more entangled, thereby limiting freedom into a total bondage. Tanu (body), Karna (organs), Bhuvana (environs) and Bhogya (objects of enjoyment) are the Visṛṣṭi evolutes of Maya, the material cause that covers intelligence and clear-thinking. We shall deal with them later, in more detail.

It would be wrong to think, according to the Siddhantins, to consider the phenomenon of Maya as a totally deluding factor in the Being's progress. The deluding principle in Māyā activates the Being, and assists it to choose friends as well as enemies. The faculty of distinction and selectiveness opens the scope to adopt a course of progress which encourages Will to cast aside delusion, and reach for a cleaner, purer way.

Evolution of Maya according to the Siddhantin, takes, thus, distinct routes. two The adoption of the purer ethical routes is prompted bythe Suddha (pure) Māyā; it helps the 'Being' to get clear of the paŝa (bondage) faster.

It is a route by following which the soul finds purer impetus to counter- act the Anava impurities which affect consciousness. The residual effects of Karma gets blunted, and are rendered ineffective. This is the evolu- tionary path or Suddha Māyā. The idea is very similar to what has been said as Suklagati in the Gîta. 10

The other path is that of Asuddha Maya, where the Anava impurities as well as the momentum of Karma retard the forward march towards liberation. The evolutes of Maya gather more and more Anava, which is the gross element in an atom of which all material body is made. Presence of Anava-mala inevitably, confuses the mind. These are the vikṛtis (deformities) of the 'being'. Vikytis prevent it from following the correct path, and acquire correct tendencies. As a result it gets pulled down to grosser levels. This has been referred to as Kṛṣṇa-gati in the Gîtă.11

Other names of Suddha-Maya are Mahā Māyā and Kutilai. There are five evolutes of Suddha Maya. Of these we have to speak later on.

The Pasa

Of the three principles of Saiva Siddhanta we have thus noted two: Pati, the Lord, His nature and function; and Paśu, the material being, which emanates from the Pati, and is imbued with .he Pati's Power. All beings are evolutes of Pati, also known as Sat-Cit.

The factor that keeps the Pasu forgetful or unmindful of Pati is Māyā, which through its evolutes confuses Pasu or the Being.

Now we shall try to study the theory of Pasa, or the factors that keep the Pasu 'tied' to its confused state. In other words we shall see how the Being-which derives its existence from the Cause, and yet which forgets the Real origin of its state of Being, is

subject to this confusion due to the delusion caused by Mãyã acting through Pāśa. Of these the most important Pāśa is Māyā herself with her thirty-five evolutes.
Therefore, Maya, which deludes knowledge, is called A-sat, i.e., contrary to the way of the Real. To translate Māyā as un-real or non-existent would be a mistake. The point becomes clearer with the appreciation of the omniscient pervasive, limitless and eternal. Soul is considered to be limited and finite only due to Tamas (ignorance), which is the effect of the presence of impurities in the construction of being, i.e., Anava-effect. 'Anu' literally means an atom; Anava, therefore means atomic. Anava-effect engenders impurities leading to confusion, or absence of composure andpeace.
Impurity in this context means any obstruction to real knowledge, i.e., obstruction to consciousness about the nature of the self. Therefore, the Anava impurity suggests that atoms by nature suffer from a restlessness which develops a force contrary to spiritual consciousness. These are the Malas, i.e., Pāśas, i.e., impurities in the body; and these form the bondages of the spirit, and keep the Pasu bonded to the Pāśa. Without getting them detached, none is free of the other. The result is a cyclic interaction within the soul in spite of changes in the body. As long as thirst is not contented, the thirst itself would seek new cups; in the event of a particular cup getting broken, another cup is ready at hand. Breaking of a cup has nothing to do with the satiation of the thirst, which remains; and remaining, eagerly searches for, craves for, and awaits satiation by securing another cup. Between a cup and a cup this thirst of the Soul maintains an unbroken bondage.

Ānava: Karma

Saiva Siddhanta points out three such bondages: Aṇava, Karma, and Māyā. Anava is the original impurities inherent in the molecules, even in their elemental stage. (In terms of modern physics it is the effect of the electronic ratio to protonic stability). It is an indeterminable factor and distinguishes coal from diamond. In spirit's language this is Mystery. Yes. Mystery to the layman; but not so to the seers. To them the Mystery is

not Mystery. But they do not explain, as they point out that it is beyond language, and only the 'prepared' and liberated souls could be in the know.) Mala or impurity is the imbalance created by electronic disproportion which seriously affects the very ingredients of Prakrti and Vikṛti (Nature and Nature-effects) in an object. Again, that case of coal and diamond illustrates the point.

Fifteen Categories

The imbalance of the Anavas in Maya, as of the Gunas in Prakṛti, project further categories comprehensible in the abstract alone. These are named as (1) Nada, (2) Bindu, (3) Sadakhya, (4) Mäheśvarî, (5) Suddha-Vidya, (6) Para, (7) Pasyanti, (8) Madhyama, (9) Vaikharî, (10) Asuddha-Māyā, (11) Kāla, (12) Niyati, (13) Kala, (14) Vidya, (15) Raga.

We shall briefly touch upon their nature before going into further details later on.

(1) Nada (Cosmic sound) is an evolute representation of pure knowledge, Jñana Śakti; Power as knowledge; it knows the pure. It It comprehends and understands.
(2) Bindu (Point) as an evolute represents action (Kriya Sakti)— Power as volition, or action.
(3) Sadakhya (Nominal Real) is an evolute which represents the action of (a) Nada on (b) Bindu. Knowledge at this stage gathers urgency of fulfilment. At this stage Suddha-Māyā does not retain any more the calm of Nada. It is an agitated stage of Nada and Bindu combined. It grows into the dynamic state of knowledge activised into an aroused sensitive state, known as Sadakhya.

(4) Maheśvari (The Supreme manifesting Spirit) is an evolute of Sadakhya with an added ability of vigorous action (which is a purely activised state of Nada when operated by Bindu).

The Nada+ Bindu+Sadakhya+Maheśvart combination has opened up, as it were, like the petals of a bud into a full bloom, absorbing with all its body the light and warmth of the sun of knowledge. This intensified state of Sadakhya leads to the final stage of Suddha-Vidya.

(5) Suddha-Vidya (Pure learning) evolves finally the whole system of expression through the medium of Sounds which are of four types (6) Parǎ (Super Beyond), (7) Paśyantî (Appearances), (8) Madhyama (Middl- ing), and (9) Vaikhari (Manifested Power). Agitated and activised knowledge intensely aware of the nature of 'itself' expresses realisation through sounds for communication with kindred spirit. The sounds also have their evolutes.

(6) Para is sound at its sublimest state (Supersonic; cosmic), like the wish of the peahen to evolute as an egg, in an egg form, its physical capacity becoming instrumental to the fulfilment of the wish. (At this stage the Yogin, the Saint, in trance becomes faintly aware of something that urges his soul to experience more intensely.)

(7) Pasyanti (cognisable; but not fully appreciable), too is indis- tinguishable, but it is more gross than Parā, like the colours of the peacock within the contents of the egg of the peahen. (At this stage the Yogin- seer, often called the Son of God, by virtue of his exclusive power to communicate with the Cosmic Supreme, becomes aware of his task to listen to something specific, which, as a phenomenon, is taking shape with- in. He becomes aware of some potentiality striving to emerge into a perceptual fact.)

(8) Madhyama (Half-way to understanding) is not yet articulate, but nevertheless, is as a stage, more advanced than (7) above. In continuation of the imagery it could be stated that the colour of the plumes are not yet 'articulate'. They cannot yet proclaim themselves as loudly as the matured colours of the peacock might do. But the plumes, even as they are, do proclaim a grey colouring that has the potentiality of future expression. (This is the state when the Truth to be revealed takes a definite comprehensive form in the mind of the Saint-seer, who realises himself as the Son of

God; as one on whom the Father's inheritance has devolved; as One who has been charged with a responsibility through adirect command. He thereby feels himself to be God's son, God's Messenger,12)

(9) Vaikhari (Articulated): "This is the stage when the sound is eloquent, clear, expressive and suggestive. This is the stage when Truth, revealed to the Saint-Son, is recited by the Saint-Son in a common understandable 'human' language), "13

But all words and sounds do not convey the same meaning to all. The capacity of deriving the benefit of identical comprehension form accurate sound varies with individuals. Hence an alphabet might mean more to one, than a sentence to another; a
sentence might mean more to one, than a whole page to another; and so on. Alternately, one could express more through a word, than another could through a sentence, and so on.

It is in this context that the uses and appeal of symbolism should be viewed. Śakti is inherent in expression. Each of the media, alphabet, word, sentence, paragraph or page
is charged with this inherent Sakti. But the power of receptivity differing, their impact too, must differ. Śakti works in each alphabet through the sound of the ending vowel (of the consonants). The letter B, is pronounced as Bee; F is pronounced as Ef; R as Aar, and so on. In these pronunciations Sakti lies in the 'vowels' such as E, E, and A respectively. Articulation of symbols is an expression of Sakti. Sakti 'is' the articulation in the sound, if not its form; symbol-figures are mere shapes of the sound. Most of the shapes are conventional; but ideas are universal and abstract. Any shape or form is meaningless when not understood, as inarticulate consonant structures are (like K articulated as Kay is with the ay). Images are mere inarticulate figures; unless approached in full spiritual communion. So are the chanting syllables, unless fully comprehended.

(10) Aśuddha (Impure) Mãyã is known as Adho (downward) Māyā because it exerts a downward pull. The gross becomes more gross. Because it deludes more and more at

each grade, it is called Mohini (en- chanting, confusing) Power, or the Deluding Power. There is an interest- ing legend recorded in the Mahabharata about the Mohini Power. Śiva was once deluded by the Mohini Power of Visnu when the drink of immortality, Amṛta, was being distributed amongst the Suras and Asuras. As the truth of Suddha-Maya leading to Sat-Cit-Siva realisation was being enunciated amongst the select group, another group was being led astray by the charms of the deluding Mohini-Sakti. The pull of physical charm was contrary to the knowledge of Immortality. It was impure. The excess of this delusion created by Sakti deluded the Sadha- kas. The deluded missed the drink of immortality. Although so deluded, the Sadhaka still retained Sakti's aid and Śiva's Grace to an extent. These are known as Aśuddha Maya and Sadasiva. Sadasiva andAsuddha Mäyä help the three evolutes: (11) Käla (Time), (12) Niyati (destiny), and (13) Kala (particles forming into groups so as to consti- tute a being). We reserve here our discussion on Nada as a metaphysical principle to be taken up a little later.

Other Evolutes and Pañca-Kosa

From Kala (Time), therefore, other evolutes appear. (14) Vidya (correct technique) which, if held on to, and practised, forms the earliest bridge to cross over to Suddha Mãyã, and get rid of Asuddha Māyā, and reach salvation. From Vidya or 'Right technique' springs up an inspiration to achieve. This is called (15) Räga or attachment. If on the contrary detachment is practised, it helps along the path of salvation, without binding the 'being' to material grossness. But this is not to be. Raga attaches to desire, and creates pangs, pains and frustrations in proportion to the distance created between desire and contentment. Thus (A) Kala (Time); (B) Niyati (Destiny); (C) Kalā (particle); (D) Vidya (Right technique) and (E) Raga (attachment): these five form together the Pañca-Koşa or Kañcuka (the five sheaths: like the Chinese box, one within the other, wherein lies in the last box the legendary Bee, which is humming for release; with the release of which the sleeping princess would awake). The Pañca-Kosa keeps the Soul captivated, as if in a deluded trance, or under a spell.

These, in brief, constitute the principal tenets of the Siddhantins. Further on we shall examine the tenets more fully in order to absorb the esoteric implications. Śaivism, as
practised by the Hindus, invariably follows, by and large, this Siddhantin pattern, the images adopted ex- pressing the tenets in symbol forms. Hundreds of legends, many more hundreds of psalms, indeed a vast treasure of every form of art expressed the Siddhantin view of Saivism. The various forms of Siva, the Lord, and Parvati, Uma or Kumari, the Sakti, along with their decorations, ornaments, camp-followers, family members, pets and rides, along with their expressions in many heads and hands, which
make us wonder about the grotesque multiplicity of Hindu polytheism, are but attempts by the yogis to determine the abstract's subjectivity in objective subjectivity. To explain them just as symbolism is over-simplification. To understand the legends and these Hindu images and the secrets of Hindu polytheism an insight into the 'systems' is essential. This leads us to a closer study of the Siddhänta.

II SIDDHANTA PRINCIPLES

Cognition: Bhogya-Kända

Both Samkhiya and Yoga propound 25 Tattvas (principles). Siddh- anta propounds 36. The increase is ascribed to (a) a developed stage of Saivic enquiry, and (b) further subtleties in the Saivic analytical probe. The more a subject is analysed, the more subtle becomes its forms. It also reaches further perfection. This observation, which appears to be sound enough, does not, however, go unchallenged. The Samkhya scholars scorn at the Saiva subtleties as redundant appendages. The first Five of these so-called appendages are the Mahabhutas (gross elements) Earth, Water, Heat, Air and Ether. Of these five, Earth is further sub- divided into Five-subtle responses of the sense-perceptions. These are known as the Tanmatras: Sound, Touch, Colour, Taste and Odour. We had occasion to refer casually to the Tanmatras before. The under- standing of this vital principle deserves a fuller study. Like the Earth,

Water possesses the first 4 of the Tanmätras;

Heat	"	"	"	3	"	"	"	"
Air	"	"	"	2	"	"	"	"
Ether	"	"	"	1	"	"	"	"

The above is the way in which the Tanmätras have been disposed of in the Bhútas. There is no Bhůta without the qualities of Tanmätra distinguishing it. It is the Tanmatras that cause the Gross Elements, the Bhûtas, and not the reverse. How Sound could cause Ether, or how sound and touch together could form a casual stage for the evolute of Air, leads to a pattern of thinking which could cause a great confusion in the minds of those who are untrained to relate subtleties with the Gross. More or less a similar stand is taken by such existentialists as Kierkegaard, Heidegaar and Sartre in establishing their theory. But to think the opposite, namely, to think that it is ether that causes sound, is not only erroneous, but even something more. It becomes prejudicial. Every- thing is grossly speaking, matter, or body; but the difference between one substance and another is caused by such 'qualities' as individualise the substances. Thus 'qualities' cause individualities of substance. The world of 'names' limit classification or categorisation by discovering special inherent subtleties. The presence of these subtleties acts as 'the cause' for categorising a substance as within a given nomenclature. The whole concept could be crystallised into the general statement that matter being one, the various forms of gross elements are 'caused' by the Tanmatras.

What causes a cup, a bucket, a gas-tank, a ship hold? Is it the metal, viz. iron? If so, a nail, which is caused by iron is a cup. Is it not the Tanmätra, the 'quality of the distinctive use for the object' that makes or causes it to be. In trying to 'have' a cup made one must have the cause for the cup first. This cause for the cup differs from the cause for the ship. One is to fill and hold liquid for my drink; the other is 'not' to fill, and 'not' to hold the liquid, so that I could be in it and ply it through liquid. This, the concept-demand and the sensual-perception, becomes the 'cause' of the object; and not the metal. The subtle is the cause for the gross. Thus is existentialism in truth. The Śiva-Linga as Spirit-Cosmic 'exists' before

the gross form existed. The same 'Linga' could also exist as 'phallus', if the form has been caused by such thought. God or penis depends on the Thinker's pre-existing causation.

The Tanmatras supply the causes for the gross elements to be categorised into the five gross names, known as the Bhutas. Thus there cannot be a substance without one or more subtle qualities which classify it as distinct from others. One of Siva's popular names in Bhutanãtha: the Lord or the Spirit of the Material Form; the tangibility of the Tanmätras. This is an idealistic view of substance defined in Pauskara Agama, and Sivajñāna-mapadiyam. In his Lowell Lectures, Lord Bertrand Russell exposes the same view in his own way. The similarities are remarkably engrossing.

Bhuta and Tanmatra

Thus we get the 5 Mahabhutas and the 5 Tanmatras. The Tan- matras help in individuating matter, and define the Bhutas. But the Tanmātras themselves are evolutes of a variety of individuation known in Saiva Siddhanta as Ahamkara. Ahamkara is a quality in an individual to accept himself as distinct from others. The sensitive subtle feel which makes a thing feel distinctly what it is, is Aham-Kära (E-go). Ahamkara is overwhelmed by Tamas or Darkness (Ignorance), which is one of three Gunas. This Tamas-Ahamkara or gross negative individuation, which knows only by distinction, is also known as bhûtädi, the Source of the Bhutas. Since it causes the five gross elements of 'Mahabhûtas', it is the Source or Adi. (We should see or feel here how Ahamkara which dis- tinguishes and keeps apart, is the opposite of unification and liberation. Hence Ahamkära (Ego) is the enemy of Mukti or Liberation.

But this function of individuation need not always be gross, dull or dark, i.e., it need not always be inert. It could be a source of positive delight. But in that case the process of Individuation must also become a process of recognition and realisation. To be able to recognise, orrealise calls for effort, energy or progress, which is just opposite to inertia. The nerve and buoyancy of the spirit leading to recognition, leads to perfect knowledge. This gives the realiser a feeling of totality, wholesome- ness, goodness. This buoyant

characteristic of Ahamkara is called Sättvika-Ahamkära. We could call this spiritualised individuation: individuation actuated by spiritual urge.

As these two fall into two extreme forms of individuation, gross and sublime, dark and illumined, ignorant and realised, there must be a mid- region wherein the extremes meet and form an area of flux undefined. This area is called Rajas or Vikyti. (Vikara in English means 'change' of one substance into another-Mutation).

1. Tamas-Ahamkara-Individuation by inertia (Dark)

2. Rajas-Ahamkara - Individuation by restlessness (heated agitation).

3. Sattva-Ahamkara - Individuation by contained calm (Enlightened activity in quietude).

In the first, knowledge is dull, or insight is dark.

In the second, knowledge is confused, or insight is blurred.

In the third, knowledge is realised, or insight is illuminated.

In Saiva Siddhanta Tamas called Vaikṛta, and Sattva is called Taijasa. Rajas is change in flux: hence Vikara is inherent. Sattva is enlightening, hence Tejah, or light, illuminates. Sättvika-Ahamkara, according to Samkhya inspires the evolutes of (a) the 5 organs of Jñana (sense): eye; ear; nose; tongue (taste) and touch; and the evolutes of the 5 organs of Karma (action) are: tongue (speech); hand; foot; the excretory and reproductive organs.

Apart from these there is another evolute, Manas, or the Mind.

Šaiva metaphysics differs here from Samkhya. It accepts the sense organs and the Manas (mind) to be the evolutes of Sattva; but not the action organs. Activity denotes heat and passion; tension and conflict. Hence the sense organs are derivatives of Rajas, and create Vikara (a state of agitated disturbance). Mind alone could bring this to order, pacify, organise and direct. Left to themselves their nature is to run away with teh Mind. Thus mind is sustained by Sattva potentiality which could influence the organs of action.

The three evolutes of Ego (Ahamkara), therefore, are known as Taijasa (the faculty of deriving perceptual knowledge): Vaikṛta (the faculty of executing action), and Bhútadi (the faculty of relating subtle to the gross through the establishment of a link between organic enjoyment and spiritual or emotional consummation of the same organic habits). Naturally, Taijasas evolute into the Jñanendriyas or Manas, or sense organs, which are five in all; the Vaikṛtas evolute into five Karmendriyas, or organs ofactivity, and the Bhútadi evolute in Tanmätras the subtle elements to which the subtle derivations of sensuous correlates are interlaced. Those subtle faculties together with the correlated subtle elements (five+five= ten) are evolutes of "Tanmatras' (Subtle sense qualities that lie behind the scope of ordinary faculties of perception).

The Twenty-five Evolutes

(1) Bhutadi (Grosselements)	(2) *Prapanca* (Faculties of *Bhutadi*	(3) *Tanmätras* (Sensuous evolutes)	(4) *Jnanendriyas (Receptive* organs)	(5) *Karmendriyas (Activelimbs)*

Bhutadi		Taijasa		Vaikrta	
Earth	1	Grossness	1	Smell	1	Nose	1	Tongue	1
Water	2	Moisture	2	Taste	2	Tongue	2	Hands	2
Heat	3	Light	3	Colour	3	Eye	3	Feet	3
Air	4	Breeze	4	Touch	4	Skin	4	Execretory	4
Sky	5	Ether	5	Sound	5	Ear	5	Organs	5
								Reproductive Organs	

Vedanta's stand regarding organs of action is still more elemental. Vedanta states that organs of action are grossly involved, in a gross world, and have to be the derivatives

of the gross elements, or the Bhutadi. This Vedanta-stand is, however, neither accepted by Siddhanta nor by Samkhya. Both defend their classification by insisting that the Karmendriyas are inspired by Ahamkara.

Ahamkara and Original Sin

The idea of the 'original sin' appears to have grown out of the theory of Ahamkara. Metaphysically speaking self-interest supplanting self- awareness actually leads the Soul of Man to a 'fall' from Sattva to Tamas. The nearest word used in English for what in the Hindu Meta- physics is known as Ahamkāra, is Ego. Yet Ego and Ahamkära are not identical. But human frailties which mislead mind to selfish sensuousness are evolutes of Ahamkara.

Characteristically the idea of Ego in Western psychology relates not so much to consciousness as to identification. It is the personal tendency to derive satisfaction from a distinction sensed by a self-identity in pre-ference to, or in abrogation of other identities, if any. It leads to a miserable degree of self-love (or self-pity) which proves to be a hindrance to the spiritual development of the self. Sublime spiritual development must overcome ego for which an abstract comprehension of the distinction between actualities of the seeming world of senses, and the realities of the eternal principles of the world of the subtleties is absolutely necessary. It reacts Thus Ego reflects through the cults of personality. through creation of distinctions in the world of sense perceptions. Ahamkara is more fundamental. It is a principle of the creative energy. It distinguishes without desire.14 In the process it collects grossness without being able to avoid it all the time.

Thus Ahamkara, although a basic principle, is a driving force, which, according to qualities inherent in the material basis of an object could be classified as Tamas-Ahamkara, Rajas-Ahamkara and Sattva-Ahamkara.

The ancient Semetic Seers who warned against the 'original sin' probably wanted to convey the same principle of Ahamkara. Sattvic ahamkara identifies the self with the

self, and claims that the cosmic, incompre- hensible, but Real, is identified in the self of the conscious man. This, probably, leads to the popular Christian Idea, contained in the saying that 'the kingdom of Heaven is within' us. The Heaven referred to appears to be the Paradise subsequently lost to the Tamas-man. Lost indeed; but the state lost to Tamas is redeemable by Rajas and Sattva. Man alone, by his efforts, could resurrect himself from this lost state. His task of recapturing the lost state is made hazardous by the grossness that he happens to collect, and fails to shed off during his pre-natal molecular state. By 'nature' he is gross; he is kept engrossed. His lack of en- lightenment and spiritualism keeps him handicapped in life. But through 'efforts' and 'will' alone he is able to shake off his grossness of the Tamas- state, and attain the spiritual state of Sattva.

The idea of Ahamkara and the idea of the original (pre-natal) sin (gross) could have got, in this way, somewhere mixed up during the migrating movements which took place in the hoary past; and this mix up could have evoluted in other ideas, such as penance, absolution, resurrec- tion and beatitude. These are ancient codes known as
Yoga, Mukti, Prayascitta, Atma-bodha and Samadhi respectively.

Ahamkara and Ego differ in equivalence. Like most of the other terms cited in the previous paragraph, they appear to be alike, but they are not. Ahamkara is a principle in Hindu metaphysics, ego is a characteristic of the human personality, and concerns the science of mind alone. Aham the I-ness, Asmita, is a distinguishing feature of the Mind that relates one to another. Aham relates; Maya binds. Both together act hand in hand. That faculty which does (Kara) the Act of distinction is Aham-kāra. It is not the My-ness which is Ego's speciality. Ahamkara leads to spiritualidentity of the inner self; ego leads to worldly identity of the extrovert man. Ego only relates; Ahamkara assists in guiding to the Absolute too.

Manas

'Manas' or the mind, both in the Samkhya and Saiva systems, is recognised as an organ. It functions in both sensing and acting. Mind senses; mind feels; mind acts. Mind has a feeling which no sensory organ has. Its feeling involves a 'sixth sense'. It feels in a way which could be explained by the cosmic alone. Mind acts even when all the acting organs are at sleep; and all the sense organs are dead like off-switch electronic wires. So intricate and mystifying are ways of the mind that we have to leave the subject here, only to be taken up later on.

Buddhi

Ahamkara is derived from Buddhi (intellect) which is the faculty that determines after distinguishing, selecting and choosing. It is a derivative no doubt; but what is it derived from? Saiva works differ about the answer.

Citta

One opinion says that Buddhi is derived from Citta. Citta is a reservoir of the three Gunas when in equipoise; else, in a state of imbalance of the three Gunas, Citta suffers from imbalance and collects Grossness (Mala, Tamas). Citta and Guna are derivatives of Prakyti, the cause of the Gunas. All that is manifold and non-intelligent must be caused. Gunas are both manifold and non-intelligent. Hence the Gunas have to be caused; and the cause is inherent in Prakyti, which is not the poised state of the Gunas.

The Siddhanta analysis of Prakyti, Guna and Citta has not been uni- versally accepted. The objection raised insist that the Gunas and Citta are not at all necessary to be viewed apart from Prakṛti. For them Citta and Prakyti are one and the same. If Prakyti is the source of the Gunas, and Citta is also the receptacle or the flux state of the Gunas, it surely means that in both Prakyti and Citta are subject to the Gunas. As such there should be no difference.

There appears to be a fallacy, however, in this method of exposition. Gunas, like rivers, may flow out of the same mountain range; and the ocean may receive the rivers as a receptacle; or a lake may receive the three flows coming out of the same

mountain. This does not mean that the mountain and the lake are functioning equally, and are the same. Prakyti is the Matrix from which the Gunas are derived. As Gunas these are different, with different characteristics. Citta is the womb where thetriplet could grow as three babies with three complexions and three personalities; or even as identical personalities with identical character. The first, like the legendary hundred sons of Gandhari, could cause disaster, because of gross behaviour. The second, like the legendary Asvins, could act as one, and contribute peace. Gunas in the unidentified

state could be Prakṛti; and the same Gunas at a peaceful poise could be Citta; but three different evolutes of Sattva, Rajas and Tamas, could be traceable to them one way or the other. The three could upset Citta's balance by refusing to come to a harmony.

A third Saiva opinion calls Citta as a variety of functioning of the Manas. Manas functions through Citta as a faculty known as Dhyana (attention), which is not the same as to call Citta a separate principle. Moreover, the evolutes which are derived as principles from Prakṛti, are traditionally known to be twenty-four. Citta makes it twenty-five; but it is untraditional addition. Hence it is redundant.

Which of the opinions is true, might be adjudged by the competent. We are to note only the existing opinions, and show (a) that Śiva- metaphysics has diverse schools; (b) that each of the schools is based on a rational system of analytical enquiry; (c) that none rests on pristine dogmas or ecclesiastical authoritarianism or dictatorship; and (d) that the basis of Śiva-metaphysics cannot be confused with the gross and rude forms of primitive objects of worship considered phallic. A set of principles which at the very elementary stage of enumeration could give grounds for developing into so many diverse schools, has to be regarded without any doubt, to have attracted a profound

attention, and provoked a universal urge of spiritual inquiry. The development of Saiva philo- sophy must be running through a highly responsible tradition of spiritual exercise. The intellectual profundity, and spiritual concern cannot be confused with the primitive adoration of nature. Elemental pantheism inspired by a sense of awe, surprise, mystery of fear could not have developed into the highly sophisticated system

of Saivism. Purely analytical understanding cannot suffer either dogma or superstition. This makes Saivism so sublime in the metaphysical texts of the East. Śaiva philosophy itself bears an eloquent testimony against the phallic aspersions current about it.

Buddhi, Ahamkära and Manas (and Citta where it is recognised). together, form the set of internal organs which influence judgement. Because of the imbalance caused by the Gunas, most of the time these upset correct judgement. Those who accept Citta, include it too in the set. The mechanics of perception, cognition and presentation of sense-objects have thus been carefully laid down in Saiva metaphysics.

Senses come into contact with objects, which become cognised without being fully defined. The faculty of defining, classifying and determiningbelongs to 'Manas'. Fastening of cognition in the undetermined stream of experience involves the Citta, classifying and determining is the act of Manas. The attempts for determination and classification lead the data of the objects to differing strata and substrata, diversifying and qualifying genus into species, and sub-species. Specification becomes a possibility through the innate faculty of Manas, which is an inner organ. The qualifying determinate or 'Višeşa' (Noun or nomenclature) differentiates the identity; that which aids in the differentiation is the qualifying factor of Visesya (adjective). In the conflict of actual determination between 'this' and 'that', the selective sense is provided by Ahamkara, which determines; but the actual acceptance of the classification is performed by Buddhi.

Buddhi is disposed into eight modes or states; four positive, and four negative. These are Dharma (virtue); Jñana (knowledge); Vairagya (dispassion); Aiswarya (authority); and the reverse of these four: that is, A-dharma (non-virtue); A-jñana (non-knowledge); A-vairagya (want of dispassion); Anaiśvarya (want of authority). There are further sub- divisions of these eight, and still further divisions of those sub-divisions. Analytical subtlety carries both Saiva and Samkhya systems to 612 categories known as Pratyayas. Analysis, and yet more analysis holds the key to the

special method followed in Hindu metaphysics, of which religion and gods form just a tangible exposition.

The Sibkect' or Bhojyaitri: Kala-Niyati-Kala

Prakyti in a pure state is the 'causa causans' the cause before any that could have a cause. As soon as Prakṛti as 'the cause' gets into the act of causing, it is known as Mala (Root)-Prakṛti. By its very nature of getting into an evolute it inheres and signifies valuation; and this very tendency of functioning ascribes to it something which is, by nature, voluntary. It is it. To say that volution belongs to it is to commit the fallacy of saying moon-light belongs to moon, liquidity belongs to water; or colour belongs to light. This is Mayata (inherence). Thus this state of Prakrti is distinguished from Múla or Parama or Maha Prakṛti as Asuddha (impure) Prakṛti, i.e., Prakṛti with the inherent faculty of evoluting into many. Maniness cannot be the property of the Pure. This phenomenon of evolving into 'something' other than 'it' involves three factors. These are time, inevitability and particleness, known respectively as Kala, Niyati and Kala. Kala involves the concept of Time, which being other than Prakrti (and being from 'Prakṛti") has a beginning and an end. Endless time is an idea; and is known as eternity. Eternity, therefore, could only mean 'time as much as one could conceive of, and beyond'. That which is in Time has to go out of it when time comes. Kala or Time is thus less than Prakyti.

Niyati follows the law of inevitability through the cyclic chain of cause and caused, sequence and consequence, cause and effect. This law of inevitability differs from the popular idea of 'destiny' in the sense that popular destiny is accepted as blind. Such a concept of fatalism goes out of line with Saiva metaphysics. Fatalism is a callous submission to destiny. It is contrary to Hindu metaphysical meterialism, because it suggests arbitrary authoritarianism. Such intervention from an unprincipled autocratic power-head is irrational and not spiritual. Our spiritual incapacity, to be able to look before and after, to be able to link up cause and effect, should not be side-tracked as

destiny. If a myopic person stumbles against a lamp-post, the blame belongs to the insufficiency of the functioning power of the eye. In the case of inner sight of knowledge, it could be developed and used. Prophets do not fall victim to destiny. They could see the past and present, and decide. Jesus knew of the events that lay ahead, He did not say to Peter, 'You will deny me three times before the cock crows' just as a miracle. He knew, he saw, he heard which we do not. That makes what is known as a Son of God, a prophet who can look before and after. But a thing in Time has to cycle on and on along the chain of Cause and Effect to its 'destined' end. This positive role that the concept of 'Destiny' plays in Hindu thought bears an ethical responsibility which does not have to suffer as does the Greek idea of Nemesis. In order to appreciate the firm basis of Hindu attitude to the life after life, this explanation of the Hindu view of Niyati (destiny) has to be absorbed. We shall have to come to this subject back in a while.

Besides Käla (time) and Niyati (Destiny) there is yet another factor which concerns the projection of an object into being. This is a 'parti- cular' being, which, as the adjective denotes, has to have a 'particle' as its nucleus. This 'particle' is a part from 'Prakrti', and a particle nucleus breathes Prakṛti's spirit. Because of its involvement in Time (Kala) and Destiny (Niyati), this Being is a victim of consequences. (Once the 'Being' could, by some process, break through this bondage or limitations of Time, Destiny and Particled condition, the 'Being' would reverse to the original Prakṛti-force, and shed the impurities of Mala. This leads to the contiguous ideas of emancipation, sublimation, salvation, liberation, or, even resurrection).

Time is independent as a principle. Despite the physical presence of all the other causes (as in the ripening of a fruit, or boiling of rice, or hatching of an egg), some effects have to await an unavoidable factor. Time itself has a maturing power. Time does not connote just a passage, like the flight of a bird; or a continuity, like a line. Therefore, though it is a unit made of many units, as a line composed of many points, yet Time is a constituent of multiplicity. Thus Time is multiple and non-intelligent.

As it is multiple and non-intelligent, so it is a 'product'. Like all products it cannot be eternal. Researches in modern physics support the Hindu theory of limitations of time.

Mahakala: The Time-dimension

Hindu concept of Mahakala, represented in the anthropomorphic form as Šiva in a perpetual dance is also dark, symbolising its non-intelligent character; and the many heads, the garland of many skulls represent the other characteristic of Kala's multiple-ness in a unit. As a symbol of Sakti (Power) Time's annihilating, disintegrating aspect is sculptored and worshipped as a female, Kāli or Camunda (see Plate 25). In the. Kala-form Siva wields a two-sided swinging drum, representing the principle of perpetual change inherent in time, as well as the change from cause to effect and effect to cause, through the physical law of integration and disintegration. This has been imaged in the anthropomorphic forms of Siva Nataraja (see Plate 39), or Bhairava-Kala. Šiva has the 'third eye' pointing clearly to an ability of transcendental vision. Siva's cosmic vision pervades all knowledge.

Destiny is the principle of leading the effect-evolute from cause to effect and from effect to cause. It is non-intelligent. It acts as a physical law; but the particle-part which leads from 'now' to 'then', present to future, could be invoked with intelligence through the energy of the Lord (Śiva-Sakti), a factor that activates all particles according to their destined end. Śiva-Sakti acts on different particles, different beings and different objects as an activising urge set on various errands.

Hindu View of Karma: Kriyamana-Sañcita-Prarabdha

A digression at this point on the subject of the so-called fatalism and passivity of the Hindu may not be regarded as an imposition. Since Hindu metaphysics regards Niyati as an essential evolute, this has often been judged at par with what the West in the Greek tradition, habitually worships as Destiny.

The Hindu is not fatalistic because he is not blind about the past; his positive conviction of Destiny or Niyati grows from his strong views regarding his past. His views of the present are sprung out of his views of the past. He may not be able to view his past. That is due to his spiritual shortcoming. But he knows that he had a pat, and his present is a product of the past. Hence he has a role to play, and to conduct himself either in fulfilment of, or in atonement of the same past. This view does not permit him to remain passive. 'Constant activity makes the man', is an opinion in line with the Caraiveti Sutra of the Aitareya Upanisad.

He is not, and cannot be passive. The way of Yoga is, the way of continuous preparation. His relaxed acceptance of Life as a consequence is misunderstood as passivity. He is not passive; he is partly relaxed, partly determined to face the future, without forgetting his past. Medita- tion in itself is not less active than a Marathon race. In fact, it is much more trying, and demanding of masculine vigour.

The point needs further elaboration. The Hindu theory of Karma is closely bound with the Hindu idea of transmigration, and continuity of the life cycle. Ancestor-worship, paying homage to the dead, and practice of virtuous deeds, form links to the same chain of the continuity of Time and the continuity of the consequences floating in Time, Karma is not the same as Kismat, Nemesis or Fate. Karma denotes the consequences of acts committed. Positive action, with positive sequences. These are the Kriyamana (unfinished)-Karma-links. Those acts done in this or in the past lives might have ostensibly gone out of the immediate view of time, but the chain of sequences continue to influence the chain of events which run into full circles. Those events, like clouds in the sky, or currents in ocean, do not wait our viewing. In running these circles, these might trigger off chained reactions in a variety of forms, noted or not noted. No man could escape the past or its consequence. To deny this is to deny the logic of chained reactions. Sañcita-Karma (Effects of past acts) does not render us helpless, more than an attacking enemy renders us helpless. It is up to us to play a foolhardy escapist vagrant who by riding the tiger feels to have secured freedom. The theory of Sancita-Karma educates a Hindu to be positive and face the issue. Arjuna

was made aware of this when he considered himself to be the master of the events as the killer. His way of thinking was termed 'uncultured' (Anarya). To stand and give battle to Life's demands is the final message of the Hindu idea of Sañcita Karma. Life assumed some duty from society; but life is born along with certain implied duties too. Duty is inherent in the trust that life lays on a person, by allowing him to grow and try educating him; and duty is inherent in fulfilling the expectations laid down as trust. Life means duty to life. Prärabdha is what has already been started; and as action already started this too is productive of commitals from which there is no escape. But future actions could so be adjusted as to make enough atonement, and save it from becoming sañcita, and thereby assist life here and hereafter from becoming unworthily burdened and handicapped.

Kriyamana Karma (Action in progressive chain of consequence) as action in the process of being acted is yet under control to be moulded, planned and set right. This may be adjusted to balance against Sancita, ad atone for Prárabdha. Never could a Hindu provide to become fatalistically passive. He is to be ever alert and doing. This is the effectof his understanding the proper principles behind Karma. His is the relaxed state of the dedicated happy soldier. He has to act ever and ever. "Niyatam kuru karma tvam" ("Act perpetually, Oh Arjuna").-Gita, III: 8.

Kala

Kala means a 'part', as is a crescent to the moon, a ray to the sun. It is not material like electrons or protons are. It is a spiritual evolute of Prakṛti, which has the gift of enlightenment. Prakrti, the reservoir of all material and spiritual being, the Womb of Creation, is composite of all the Gunas: yet it retains within it, even in an infinitesimal degree, the ability to spiritualise and purify.

St. Theresa of Avilla speaks of the 'Spark'.

This prayer is a little spark of true love for Him which the Lord begins to kindle in the Soul. He wishes this soul to come to understand the nature of this love with its

attendant joy. This quiet and this little spark... is not a thing that can be acquired, as anyone who has experience of it must immediately realise.15

This power in Prakṛti is able to remove, as St. Theresa's 'Spark', the enveloping Tamas, or darkness or ignorance, that overcomes the Being. It is able to remove ignorance of its own accord; for bringing it up to its peak of power an effort is called for. A soap is a soap because it 'can' clean. Yet it does not clean unless certain other facts put it to its maximum ability to work for cleaning. Kala has to be invoked. It is at this point that the role of Yoga leading to Samadhi comes into play.

Yoga: A Neutral System

Commonly, Yoga is confused, with Hinduism, as a religion. This is another common error, a fallacy that interested churches have propagated for their narrow ends. It is only a Hindu way of reaching the meaning- fulness of life. Like Hindu mathematics, Hindu music, Hindu art, Hindu astronomy or Hindu medicine, it is an independent contribution to the efforts of reaching spiritual transcendence. It is a way of transcendental meditation with all its delight and rewards. Yogis indeed are suspects to the religious technocrats as atheists; they are at times posed even as standing challenges to religious conformity. Like Kabira, Śamkara, Spinoza and Descartes, the saints, the metaphysicians and the philosophers, communicate and associate beyond the brotherhood of religion. The Yogis form a brotherhood by themselves. Toga is a subjective method of concentration of the mind leading to transcendental realisation, through successful meditation. It has no religious overtone at all. All it insistson is a code of formal discipline. What makes it appear as Hindu is the fact that Hindus alone have preserved and practised this ancient system. In this sense the Ganges is a Hindu river, the Sitär is a Hindu musical instrument, and capäti is a Hindu food.

The role that personal effort plays in Yoga, and the elaborate emphasis that is laid on the discipline of efforts, misleads some into thinking that by laying absolute reliance on personal efforts and external mechanics the Togi excludes the idea of Divine Grace.

To the Yogi's eye Jesus Christ, Hazrat Muhammad, or St. Theresa was as much a Yogi as Kapila, Dattatreya, Nanak or Mirabai.

Grace: Karuna

So far as Grace (Karuna) is concerned, the relation that Prakrti has with Kala (Time) clearly indicates that Prakyti is supreme as the source of Energy, Will and Consciousness. How this thought becomes the unifying factor of the various gods and goddesses that crowd the Hindu pantheon has been treated already in the previous chapters on the Hindu Systems of Philosophy, particularly in the chapters on 'The Mother', and 'Bhakti". Without Prakṛti's Karuna (Grace) not a drop of dew would descend to activise germination, or cool the thirst in a cup of pollens and make them matured for further continuity of life. Water would lose its life, air would lose its breath. Science explains. Grace creates. This is how Grace and Prakrti become part and parcel of the same subject-object function.

As Kala's (Time's) anthropomorphic image inspires the devotees to the worship of Śiva, so the innate idea of Prakyti gives form to the image of the Mother. It is only at the emotive level of Bhakti that the idea of Grace presents itself in all its profundity. Yoga proper conducts the application of the mind to the objective of Transcendental Realisation. Bhakti-Yoga is also a Yoga, and is attainable through much of the prescribed forms as presented in the Yoga system.

So far as the idea of God is concerned, Yoga neither proposes a new God (nor a Hindu God), nor does it militate against, or antagonise, or counteract, any accepted theism based on God-Reality. It does not propose a God; it does not impose a God; it destroys no God; it does not even remove or touch any given God. Yoga as a system supports no theology in particular.

It remains neutral, as all principles must. As a result, it brings home the fact that the Real being one and the same, despite difference of approach, God is one. Thus understood God-Realisation becomes an inescapable challenge to any fully conscious

person. It purports to declare, "The divine is within this body, every body;" "I am He;" "TheAtman is the Brahman;" "The Kingdom of God is within us;" "Thou art

That."

The Ailing World and Yoga

The latest evaluation and reassessment of Hinduism in the West rests mainly on this Hindu insistence on rationalistic realism for discovering the realms of spirit and Universal peace. Nineteenth century European Thought had fallen under a spell of cynicism and empiricism. This led to a spiritually deserted area of cavility, where philanthropy struggled with misanthropy, and spirit fought with form. Extreme demands of democracy guided mind to achieve a father-figure, a superman idea; the idea of a champion for an acquisitive society. It inevitably opened the way to military adventurists, and dictators, in suppression of love, understanding, law and ethics. Under a strong spell of materialistic charm for immediacy, a vicious form of nationalism rocked human efforts; racism, colour-prejudice, commercial interest, even religious bigotry split humanity wide apart. A severe race for acquisition and expansion through power and tricksterism fostered chauvinism of every stamp. Love languished in a wilderness of banishment. Great thinkers like Rolland, Marx, Croce, Tagore, Shaw, Lenin, Hesse, Laski, Russell, Einstein were being frowned upon, discouraged, challenged, even threatened. Many were dubbed pacifists; and some as the all-time 'dangerous' communists. For mankind no more complex time ever passed; and we are still struggling under the vaunted legacy of nationalism, parochialism, communalism and jingoism of every brand. And we nurse them to the delight of authoritarianism, commercialism, fascism and capitalism. Eversince, principally through the instrumentality of Western political thinking, the world has been kept under the grip of a kind of subjective gangsters who hold peace and prosperity at a ransom. In the commerce-mad, market-hungry Industrial culture, super-barbarous theories succeeded in getting anarchism, patriotism, terrorism, militarism, socialism and communism grievously mixed up.

Fortunately, the panic has quietened down. But only the panic; the fear is not over. Only we are getting used to international gangsterism and fear. The menace still looms large. Fear for another World War has brought about a hazardous atmosphere of pacification, which is not Peace. Nothing negatively treated, and negotiated through fear is positive or good. But even the worst nationalists are being compelled to own the inefficacy of their policy. New minds are attempting to dis- entangle this dangerous mix up. The New-Asia is making the New- America reorient its hasty onrush into the arena of world-peace. The clever camouflage of covering commercial interests with the traditionalliberalism of Christianity and what was known in the nineteenth century as the American-spirit, is being brought to the fore once again by some of the versatile young Americans and Europeans. This has, in its turn, led to a reassessment of the poised life of the Orient, specially of the Hindus.

Hinduism today is realising more and more the values of Vedanta and Yoga. This neo-Hinduism has become conscious of its real spiritual heritage. This new trend in Hinduism is becoming far more effective, because gradually the Hindu youth is becoming convinced of the superiority of this subjective approach to the mere emotional servility to traditional priestism and ritualism. The growing urban hysteria of crowding around 'sponsored' and 'promotioned' Yogis, glorified miracle-men, are sympto- matic of the dying tremors of a panicked society madly seeking a convenient 'spirit-raid-shelter' to hide from its chasing sense of guilt and shame. Social criminals, who bathe themselves in borrowed and sham glory, who feel puffed and inflated through snatched and temporary powers, are on the rampage, for justifying their conduct through a false association with ethics and spiritualism. They are on the run; but they need to main- tain a brazen faced facade.

As a result, prophetism and miracle-mongering has been growing. These are having a field-day. This is not the first time in history that this has happened. It happened every time a great but aged and palsied culture writhed in its death-spasms like a noble python, or a grand octopus, grown out of size, but breathing its last. It happened to such greats in culture as the Egyptian culture, the Sumerian culture, the Greek culture,

the Iranian culture, and even to the Roman, the Manchurian and the Mughal cultures. Prophetism is a profit making occupation that thrives in a society charged with a sense of insecurity. This is not Hinduism, although the changing Hindu society, true to historical form, has been patronising it, specially in the urbanised population. A revaluation of Hindu thoughts is bringing up a crop of young minds which successfully questions, and if necessary, defies authority, attacks jingoism, challenges dogmatic adherence to forms, and breaks up fraudulent institutions of magnified pseudo-glory based on pomp, dramatised by legends and fads, reserved through snobbery, highlighted by showmanship, and dished with spiced cliches.

The frustration of efforts and the emptiness of spirit experienced in the second decade of this century has at last turned the minds of Western scholars to undertake a serious study of comparative religion. Honest attempts are afoot to reassess the Eastern mind. Even die-hard politicians are taking a second look at problems like Common Europe, Communion, relations with China, Russia and Cuba. The humiliation of America's mighty power at the hands of a tiny people's will has opened the eyesof the self-applauded greats for other values and other assessments, This augers, happily, a climate of better understanding for spiritual thinkers in particular, but for mankind in general. It is, in the light of the above, expected that much of what is being now practised in the name of Hinduism, but in reality in the interest of quackery and commercial gains, shall fade out like the Beetles, the Jazz and the Wood- stock. The storm of irreverence blowing against forms and classics shall eventually pass. A degenerating movement is a denial of the source of process of life. Such movements do not outlive their days of excitement. This automatically makes man think of an Eternal Cause, a primum mobile, a vera causa, about which religions are either silent, or dogmatic, or, paradoxically, both. The only non-dogmatic rationalistic approach, a psychologically rewarding and logically viable approach, is provided for in the Hindu metaphysics specially in the system of Yoga. Once this metaphysical process, with its principles is fully appreciated, the mis- conception regarding Hindu polytheism should stand explained. The multiple gods cease to exist in their multitude. The many ideas

become reconciled. They begin to convey the one and the same Idea. To attach spiritual, emotive or sentimental forms to a cherished Idea is primarily due to a natural weakness of man for embellishing the object of his adora- tion. Man creates the god he is most fitted to fall in love with. Gods emerge to provide human adoration with a home and a refuge.

God in Yoga

Thus Yoga, instead of militating against religion, or God, or churches, actually help everyone, irrespective of church, or religion, to recognise the inescapable necessity of living with some spiritual goal. Such a spiritual goal is not bound to exist in denial of a material goal which is equally vital for existence. This goal is God. Each man has his God. So viewed, there is none who does not worship, or who lacks a religion. To think is to philosophise: to pursue that truth through unflinching actions is to worship. To hit upon one's appropriate God is to understand Prakṛti. Pursuit according to Prakṛti's innate ability is to advance towards a spiritual realisation.16

Pañca-Kosa: The Five Sheaths

Prakṛti understood, Kald or the 'particle', 'the spark', becomes easy to be appreciated. Although it is an innate spiritual function of Prakrti, although it is universal to life, although all living beings are born with this innate quality of Prakṛti, yet all may not be fortunate enough to get the touch of Kala. Conceitedly we happen to feel that we distinguishwhat we call the 'lower' species of life as different from human species. We also distinguish the 'lower' from the 'higher' on the basis of what we call consciousness. But we do not like to stop and think if we ourselves are fully conscious. Full consciousness is rare in man. All of us are partially conscious. Kala's touch lies beyond our grasp until we are fully conscious. Many live and die without ever feeling what is this consciousness; what is its exact function; what benefits does it potentially store for us; or what must be done to derive the utmost benefit from its presence in us. The benefits Yogis receive from divine Grace is to get into touch with Kala, the very

root of Consciousness, which gives, as it were, purpose and life to awareness. We as men call ourselves superior to animal, birds and insects because we suppose that we derive more benefit from consciousness. But do we? All of us? Consciousness fully made aware could lead us to the utmost of Power. fully aware?

Yes. But are we

The fact remains, whether we cognise this spark in us or not, whether Caitanya or Kala invokes in us ecstasy of 'saturated identity' (Tanmayata) or not, it 'is' there. Its invocation may or may not become the goal of our life; but it is there. The 'spark' in the match-stick is there. It is for us to get it alight for us.

But Kala (Time) is not Kala (spark). Both lie covered behind a curtain of Tamas (inert dullness). Both are overwhelmed by a complete lack of knowledge about 'before and after'.

Kala (Particle: Spark) functions in two ways. The first way depends on the congenital impulse of the Mala-Prakyti, which is the most active source of creative energy. If the Matrix, the very Source, at the very first touch of a creative stir, gets along the way of reaching its transcenden- tal enlightenment, due to, may be, a life long meditative application; or, more fortunately, due to, may be, a lucky placement in life within a conducive environment; or, may be, due to the forces of actions performed in previous lives, because of which the subject, the Sadhaka, has no cause to adopt other ways. He is congenitally awakened and enlightened. Helped by Prarabdha Kala (spark) he functions along an easy natural course. This is the first way.

The second functional way of Kala lies through the processess of Vidya and Raga. Vidya generally means technical knowledge; and Raga, attachment.
Vidya and Jnana both mean 'knowledge' in English; and are, therefore, apt to be confused. But, in fact, the two concepts are quite different. Jnana is the knowledge of understanding. It is primarily theoretical. It is directly intellectual. It is Realised knowledge. Vidya is the knowledge of the techniques. It is essentially practical. Guru

could give Jhana: but Vidya has to be acquired by practice. Jnana could be 'taughtand imparted; Vidya, which could be demonstrated is an acquisition of the Self. A person of Jnana may become an educated and 'Wise' being; the person who has attained Vidya, although unlettered, could be a man of peace and love. By his very presence he conveys much more than speech or writing could. He has Vidya, which is more than Jñana.

Similarly Raga which means 'attachment' is confused with 'A-Vairagya', which means 'non-detachment'. Raga is to feel attached to a degree where personal identification is totally merged into the impersonal joy. A-Vairagya is refusal to be detached from the objects, which, by their nature, stand detached, and inevitably have to be detached from. The evergrowing nail or hair, once detached, becomes dirt. Growing property, growing family, growing material possessiveness, inevitably has to get detached. Not to bear this in mind is to suffer from the mental failing of 4-Vairagya. To feel attached to matter is not the same as to feel attached to the spirit.

Vidya and Raga are intellectually cognised, but spiritually consummat- ed. Jnana and A-Vairagya keep materially interested and involved, but they lead to a cynical coldness of unreality. The first two are relished through direct spiritual involvement; the last two call for media, material objective media, for their fulfilment. Thus it must be a second grade of enjoyment, because it is not independent. It must lead to

sorrow,

because man, who has no control over his own self, can never aspire to control a medium on which his happiness depends.

If the cognitive energy of the Lord were directly active, bliss alone should be recognised, as pure bliss is of the nature of that energy; in order to account for our experience of pleasure and pain, Vidya has to be admitted as an intermediary. Similarly attachment appears in the intellect, only as controlled by the emotive faculty, which needs to be manifested by Siva-Sakti, through an appropriate instrument. This instrument is Raga.17

The five Kancukas: Kala, Niyati, Kala, Vidya and Raga. These are the Panca- Kancukas (five sheaths) which form together the personality of the Being. We have already studied them as Tattvas. These in their turn cause the five types of Klesa or suffering. The Five Klešas (sufferings) are: Avidya (Ignorance), Asmi-ta (Egoity),
Raga (Attachment), Dveşa (Aversion), and Abhinive'sa (Clinging to life). The overcoming influence of these retarding experiences become too difficult to bear. As a result, an inner craving for liberation from sufferings, keeps our efforts moving towards reaching the Malaprakṛti, where peace is. The Five Klešas to- gether are called Pumstva-Mala, and the suffering soul is known as Puruşa Tattva,18.

Adhvans: The Paths

Thus we have the seven principles again. These are: (1) Asuddha Maya; (2) Kala; (3) Niyati; (4) Kala; (5) Vidya; (6) Raga; and (7) Purusa.

The 24 principles discussed before are Impure; these seven are said be mixed. There is a set of pure Tattvas comprising of another five principles to be discussed later. Thus there are 3 sets of Adhuans (ways) in Śaiva Siddhanta:

(1) Abuddha-Adhvan (Impure Way) of 24 Tattvas;

(2) Misra-Adhuan (Mixed Way) of 7 Tattvas; and

(3) Suddha-Adhvan (Pure Way) of 5 Tattvas.

The first set is known as Bhojyaitri-Kanda (the section dealing with the enjoyers); the second set is known as the Preraka Kanda, (the section dealing with the promoters of enjoyment); and the third set is known as the Bhogya-Kanda (the section dealing with the objects to be enjoyed). The first is fully conscious and volitional; the second is also totally conscious but instrumental; the third is the actual object that inspires consciousness to its zenith, and acquires the property to deal directly with the Real.

Siva Tattva

Prakrti as a principle is supreme over other principles because all activity emanates from Prakṛti. All the other principles evolute from it, and all are subject to change. Even the principle of change is inherent only in Prakrti.

Since the other principles are subject to change, they are mutable; and mutability prevents them to become all-in-all, and complete in itself. Therefore it stands to reason that for the eternal, changeless, 'all-in-all' principle, 'the beginning of beginnings without end', 'the Alpha and the Omega', 'the all pervasive, and beyond', we have to look to another Principle.

This is Siva. It is the idea that as a Principle of Principles is both conative and cognitive. In it stops the classical cycle of the 'chick and egg' query. In this Tattva all queries end. This is the Paravara of the Upanisads. The Immensity of the Idea could only be Realised (not explained); but for our understanding this idea has to be translated within the limits of human understanding. The intangible and the immanent has to be made suited for the comprehension of the poorer intellect of men. Here comes the usefulness of expression of the inexpressible. This expression could be linguistic, literary, symbolic or imaged in human shape, irrespective of the medium the expressed form itself is regarded as an embodiment of the Ideal Siva. Śiva congeals into shape the abstract idea of the Principle which as the Lord of Prakṛti finalises the Cause andthe Caused. It is Šiva. Pure delight in the fullness of its final saturation. Šiva-Tattva is inviolable. It is not subject to any formation other than what it is. It is not liable to transformation. Even Sakti is not it; Sakti is of it, Sakti is there inherent within the Siva Tattva.

Mala-Prakyti or Prakṛti-Maya, as we have noted before, is evolved from Asuddha Maya. We have noted that this power of 'assuming' forms confers on Sakti the conative of Maya-ta or the quality of Maya. Why then is it called Asuddha Maya? Impure Mäyä? What are the impurities? The property of change cannot be termed an impurity.

Ašuddha Maya

We have noticed that with the assumption of forms, limitations are assumed. These irresistible limitations are Kala, Niyati and Kala. All emanations from Prakṛti are subject to change, and are affected by the three factors as the subjects evolute through the whirls of Maya.

When Maya is free from Kala, Niyati and Kala, it is immaculate, and is called Suddha-Maya. The experience of Asuddha Maya is a daily affair. Our entire involvement with the fascinations of life and its environs is due to the interplay of hopes and fears, emotions and sentiments, which are the effects of Maya's bonds. But beyond this immediate material existence there is a transcendental existence. That transcendental existence is a projection of this very existence, but remains to us a mystery. Thus the process of Life mystifies us. The experience of that transcendental life is not within the reach of all and sundry. He who experiences it also experiences the immaculate nature of Suddha-Maya, the fascinating- involvement of the fraction with the whole, without any limiting property; free from all kinds of bonds. Not by polemics, dialectics, casuistry is this experience attainable; neither is it possible to speak of it. It is an experience beyond the expression of language or comprehension. It is a state cognisable to the feeler and the felt. There is no third in it.

This thrill of the two, the knower and the known, is, and ought to remain a mystery. It is made viable to the Third-eye' alone; i.c., to the inner vision. When reduced to form, form of sound, shape, picture, image, suggestion, implication, to any kind of dimensional limit of time or space, the nature of the eloquent silence of Immaculate (Suddha) Mäyä becomes subject to the limits of Kala, Niyati and Kala. This makes it Aluddha, impure Maya. From steadiness it becomes transitory; from reality shifts to illusion. Its changefulness gives it the illusiveness for which it is so much feared.

We have already seen that Mäyä is not Illusion. Yet we use the word illusion to signify Maya for the sake of convenience. To appreciate the difference between Suddha and Asuddha Mäyä is to learn the art of look-ing at all things in their true reality. This knowledge has been called the Prince of Knowledge, Prince of Mystery. (Raja-Vidya

and Raja- Guhyam). It could be known only through experience (Pratyaks-ā- vagamam).

Siva-Tattva emanates from this knowledge. The power acquired is thus known as Śiva-Parigraha-Sakti, the power that leads to the under- standing of the Real Nature of Śiva.

The Immaculate Suddha-Maya or Mahamaya is not the Lord; neither of the Lord. This is explained through a classical illustration of a slab of pure crystal and red hibiscus flower. When we bring a coloured object near a crystal, and place the same on it, the crystal 'assumes' the colour, but is not coloured thereby. As the object is removed, the colouring vanishes without leaving any reactive sequence at all. So, in no sense the slab could be said to be coloured. Round crystal paper-weights often display kaleidoscopic colourings like this, a power assumed, taken on, Parigṛhita.

Śiva emanates this Sakti as the first evolute of the set-of-four Sina- Tattvas. The second one is known as Sadasiva, which emanates from Šakti- Tattua. In this concept we could image a state where the conative and cognitive powers are at peace, a state of equipoise.

This, however, is different with regard to Isvara Tattva. Isoara-ta, or the functioning of Isvara-Tattva operates objectivity the conative state in Isvara Tattva becomes supreme. The cognate becomes second. Mere knowing, or understanding becomes contemplative. Expression becomes the goal. Power to participate consciously through application of will drives towards a definite goal. This goal is to achieve expression. All 'expressions' are emotively involved; so is Isvara-tattva. But Siva is free from emotion. Isvara Tattva becomes an imperative state for perfection of subjective contemplation.

Nature of Pure Knowledge: Suddha-Vidya

Such conative application of Will over cognitive, does not constitute the function of Suddha-Vidya. In its application the cognitive in Suddha- Vidya dominates the conative. Suddha-Vidya knows, perceives, feels, conceives, but does not express or proceed in a way characteristic of the emotive function of Isuara.

Knowledge gained through the purity of subjective realisation is not the same as knowledge gained through attachments to objects, and known as practical knowledge. Truth is realised through contemplation and meditation. Vision gathered through the application of a hypersensitive inner set of faculties engenders more sustaining confidence. Knowledge inferred through readings of data and logs collected from sensual reliance on mechanistic devices and functional apparatus fails in contrast to inspiresimilar subjectivity of confidence. Such knowledge is subject to loss or gain, decay or progress, falsity or correctness, pain and despondence. The inevitable limitations of time or destiny continue to dog the inferences made. Castles built on shifting sands do not provide the best form of security.

In contrast, knowledge gathered through subjective realisation is not open to change, being abstract by nature. It relates to the Ultimate. It is a realisation of the sumum bonum. It is an 'experience-in-itself'.

"Since time belongs to the clan of inferior impure evolutes," says Dr. S. N. Sastri, "it should follow that the pure principles are timeless and that there is no question of priority or posteriority among them."19

Aghora Siva in his Tattvaprakasika objects, however, to Maya being interpreted as a Parigraha Sakti. The realistic and the idealistic schools of Agamas argue this point with such subtleties as should not interest any but the actual Sadhakas (aspirants) themselves.

III

Nada-Tattva or the Sound-System

The systematisation of the evolutionary analysis of matter and con- sciousness makes the Siddhanta-Siva-Tattva a formidable school of metaphysics on its own right.

According to this, Siva-Tattva relates to the phenomenal world, as the Mahāmāyā Tattva relates to the underlying principle of changes in phenomena. It is a system which has taken some pains in explaining the intricacies of the phenomenal changes in the nature and form of beings. The roles of Suddha Maya and Mahāmāyā, as explained before, attempts to clear up the phenomenon of Unchange in Change.

The reason for this great care is obvious. It only makes us understand the Principle of Siva, the Siva Tattva, more clearly. For further aids in this exercise of clarification the Siddhantins have gone into the analysis of yet another area, the area of Sound, and called it Nada Tattva. Näda is the cosmic Sound; and this very Sound ultimately expresses itself as articulation. Yet by our conscious efforts we have utilised the faculty of articulation to picture our thought sequences, and used this natural pheno- menon, namely sound, as a means of communication, not only between two different identities, but also within our own selves. Many a time we ourselves get confirmed in our thought sequences, or emotional upheavals by some sound which expects no witness, or audience, exceptourselves to hear.

The world of thought being transformed into sound, words, and their meanings, grows into a mystic world by istelf. The entire process involves perception, comprehension and volition, and includes a complex process of mechanical co-ordination between thought and utterance. The Siddhantins have engaged their minds to this area of human effort, and discovered a great metaphysical implication in the mechanism, which permits them to discover the deep mystery of the relation between Will and Expression; Wish and Achievement; Being and Power; Śiva and Sakti. To follow carefully the Näda Tattva of the Siddhantins is to be able to follow the Siva Tattva still more clearly.

Is sound always articulated? Is all sound cognisable? Is all thought translated or translatable into sound? Is silence a feature of articulation? The heard sounds are sweet; but those unheard, are they really sweeter as the poet suggests?

Change so far, as we have seen is a function of the Will of Suddha- Mäyä, otherwise known as Mahamaya. This evolutionary change concerns the world of things, or of beings. All these material-changes are infused, with the Mayata of the Maya, which inspires all with different categories of Consciousness.

Nada-Bindu-Tattva: The Sound World

There is also a changing world of Sounds which has been indicated before. This is Sabda Prapanca (the World of Sounds), as the former one is known as Artha-Prapanca (the World of Meaning).

That Sound is a quality inherent in ether, and that its communicating medium is the waves in the ether-sea was a fact known to the ancients. They knew that Sabda (sound) was the property of Akasa (ether). They also knew that a sound drops into the ether-sea, like stone dropping in a pond; similarly it creates waves which expand gradually in a circular form, leaving the particular point as its centre. Sound-Areas are contained within the circular Field created by this 'Drop (Drop-Linga; Field-circle-Gauri or Śakti-Patta).

Sound in Sanskrt is also known as Nada, but Nada denotes the total sonic action that envelops the Field of the sound, and not merely 'the' sound. And Drop in Sanskrt is Bindu. The philosophy of Sound in Siva- Tattva is known as the Nada-Bindu-Tattva. It is a systemisation of the per- ception of the phenomenon of Sense-Sound transformation through the mechanism of articulation. This process suggests to the Siddhantins a great symbolism which conveys and clarifies the Siva-Sakti concept.

We must not forget that our chief objective in this research is the discovery and purpose of the ultimate state of Peace. Gods, Grace,meditation, prayer, all become but means for attaining this end and no other. In the Hindu way of thinking the Mantras, or

the mystic sounds, syllables and words, become symbolic of cosmic sense. Hence a 'Mantra'. A Mantra is a living God. Chanting of Mantras is living in God. Hence the understanding of the sound, its relation with the conceived idea on the one hand, and with the sense-symbolism of expressed thought on the other, is vitally significant to the Sadhaka, we would very well like to know why a sound like Om, or Hring, or Kling would become so important to his spiritual quest. Saiva-Siddhanta offers the theory of Nada for the removal of such doubts.

The second objective in analysing the Nada Prapanca offers a sublime symbolism through which the actual concepts of Siva-Sakti or Siva-Māyā, or Purusa-Prakrti become further illustrated. Since the tradition of yogis is a very ancient one, from time to time, great seers, in attempting to explain the Mystery, have used a variety of ways. Each of the explana- tions has used its own language, own symbolism, own illustrations. There has accumulated over the years a number of standing classical illustrations: moon and light; crystal and hibiscus; lamp and light; vessel and air; etc. This sound-sense compact illustrates in the Nada theory yet again another way of fully appreciating the importance of Mantra in connection with the goal of realising the final Truth which the Siva-concept projects. The correlates of the sublime Šiva-Reality and the correlates of the Sense transforming itself to Sound are so similarly placed as to help each other in understanding the metaphysical basis.

How is this done?

We are aware of the articulated sounds; but we are not so much aware of the inarticulated sound. Those acquainted with the views of Kierkegaard, Heidegger, Sartre, Simone de Beauvoir know that such an inarticulate state is the essence of existentialism. Existentialism attempts to spell the death of existence. In other words Existence of an idea exists much before its physical existence. As a matter of fact, despite a physical existence the idea-existence, i.e., the 'existence' before existence does not end, die, or continue. This is because an Idea is nearer the subjective 'per-fection' than a physically existent form of the Idea. Idea and Reality are eternal; not

actuality. The fact that (a) it is not perceived by the thinker himself except in the thought, i.e., it is not perceived by any sensual organs, and (b) the fact that this inarticulated (or undefined) state is yet beyond the scope of communication, does not mean that it does not exist. It is a medium in solitude, and refuses to part with it except through silence. Truth lies in subjectivity. Existence of the Reality survives on an intensity of feeling. To expose a feeling felt is to amputate it. The Sadhaka in whose mind the feel of an idea is alive and intense, forms first an intense and infinite relationship with it. As an effect of this he formsan infinite relation with himself. Thus an individual aspirant feels and forms his idea much before taking action for the execution of an idea into an act in order to produce a perceptible result. Inarticulated 'sound- forms' are as much a possibility as inarticulated forms of touch, sight, smell, etc., etc. In fact, it is an imperative and unavoidable stage in all types of articulation. This stage could be missed by a dull person. Many, in fact most of us, live apparently, without ever experiencing living intensely. We exist because we think. But how many of us feel our existence in our thinking?

The aspirants have to live in their intensity; in their solitude; their subjective individuality. They are in pursuit of the self. Hence they are the ones who perceive inarticulated feelings. The inarticulated sounds are perceived by all. Perceived only; we are not speaking that the perceived is automatically understood. That is a different matter altogether.

But besides the articulated sounds there is an area of the inarticulated. This area is again subdivided into three sections depending on the expres- sion of the potential power of expression and communicable knowledge of each. These three are (a) Pară; (b) Pasyanti; and (c) Madhyama, which have already been dealt with a little before.

Speaking now, in terms of Mantra, the sounds of a particular Mantra are selected by the Sadhaka in the Para state, where the meaning and the purpose, as well as the forms, of the sound are all mixed up; and the Sadhaka is only attempting to distinguish the proper articulation of the unarticulated. At the second state (Pasyanti) the Mantra is

taking shape, and is about to prove fully congruent with the concept in the Idealistic stage. But in the third stage of Madhyama the Mantra is formed, and the Sadhaka knows it to be what it is, and what it should be. But yet he does not part with it, and give it an utterance. It is intimately his and his alone.

It would be cleared up and manifested in the next stage. That is the Articulated stage.
The Inarticulate state had three subdivisions.
The articulated state has two subdivisions.

The Articulated Sound is Vaikhari. This too has a subtle and a gross form. The subtle, of course, would deal with the idea of Ituara, which is a manifesting form, next to Siva, the unmanifest, and could be brought within the range of communication. Siva as Reality can never be brought within the range of communication. Siva is 'In Itself. The individual's personal intimate realisation alone is Siva's quiet inarticulate abode. Isvara alone emerges as manifest. Vaikhari's first Tattva is thus Isvara Tattva. That which is more expressed and communicable, that which is 'card, seen and felt in the light of purity, the subject-object expression of Realised Truth, is the Suddha-Vidya-Tattua.

Similarly, Madhyama denotes Sadasiva-Tattva: and of course, Pasyanti denotes the full-fledged Sakti Tattva.
Sakti and Sakti Tattva, as already pointed out are different concepts. Sakti is Suddhamaya; but not Sakti-Tattva, which is an evolute of Suddha Maya. The same distinction for the same reason should be maintained between Bindu and Bindu-Tattva.

With particular reference to this topic of Nada and Bindu principle, a digression may be indulged in at this point. Pakyanti is Bindu in the analysis of Sound. Para, likewise, is Šiva. These two constitute the famous Nada and Bindu: symbols of the circle and the dot, or the half circle and the dot. Yet these have been confused with the phallic symbolisms of the fish sign, or with the frank vaginal forinations, as found in the Osksey church, near Cirencester, or the Kilpeck churches in Hertfordshire (both in Eng- land), or the Shelah-na-Gig (see Plates 7, 8, 9, 9A) statues of Ireland, or similar

representation found in Sicily, Cyprus and other Mediterranean countries. It is not at all my claim that the Phallic signs, the phallic sym- bols, the phallic images have not been traced to India, and even to the Hindu cults [From Mohenjo-daro to Parasurameśvara images (see Plate 10) a tradition is evident]; but I intend to point out that the Siva Tattva and the Nada-Bindu symbol is independent of the phallic designs. The con- fusion or the misconceptions arising from some similarity of designs between Nada-Bindu symbols, Siva-symbols and phallic symbols are acci- dental, and not coincidental. The grievous effects of over-simplification indulged in by writers, having little knowledge of Siva system of meta- physics, serve no good purpose either for the study of the phallic, or for that of Saivism. (For Nada-Bindu see Plate 33; and for the simple Linga form as used by the Hindus see Plate 11.)

The understanding of the theory of sound (Sabda-Nada-Bindu) leads Śaiva metaphysics to the celebrated system of Sphota.

Sphota and Realisation

Sphota is a technical term. In his famous grammar Panini uses it in an extremely restricted sense. This sense is sensitively aware, and sub- jectively actual.

The theory challenges the actual point of time when thought, commu- nicating through sound, struggles to bring out and complete a sense-unit, for which it depends on a mass of previous experiences classified as data- symbols. This is carrying existentialism to a further subjective scrutiny, and carry out the subtlest anatomisation of as subjective an area as evolves sense from sound and sound from sense.

What part does an alphabet play in the exposition of (a) a sound; (b) sense? When and how is a sound a completed sound? At whatstage exactly does a sound phenomenon become a meaningful word? When does a 'sound' detach from the apprehensible with the quality of 'sense'? 'How does' is not so important in Sphota as 'When does'. When does the configuration of Water, or Moss, or Iron, or an Ape or a Cabbage or a Camel crystallise from Isvara, and where does Isvara exist without such configuration? Who

or what, then, exists? Isvara or a Cabbage? Sense or Sound? Yes, the theories of Satkaryavada or Pariṇāma-vāda (q.v.) do indeed explain changes from sequence to
consequence, cause into effect, or evolution,-but that is neither all, nor final. 'A' given, 'Y' is a change from 'A'; but between 'A' and 'Y' when exactly in "Time" the change comes, and in what shape before 'A' has become 'Y', and after 'A' has left 'A' or ceased to remain 'A'? An abstruse question; but a relevant one, a pertinent one.

Sphota is that configuring moment in the Time-current when sense configures as sound form; when the phenomenon of comprehension bubbles as apprehension; when that
which existed, becomes that which gets in- volved. In the Time-current this must be a point-in-time, when the actual fulfilment reaches, but shuns to stagnate, and passes on
to the next Sphota. Thus Sphota is a creative moment in silent eternity.

In the same way, what part does a word-sound play in transfiguring into a sentence-sound? And a sentence-sound to an Idea; and an Idea to an Ideal? In other words did Śiva transform to Isvara, and isvara to Sadasiva? It is a grammarians' syllogism. This has been used in meta- physics in analysing the spiritual (and esoteric) involvement of sound with the Cosmic knowledge, and of knowledge with the Idea. The power to acquire the necessary keenness for such apprehension is Yoga. Sound, and the mysticism of Mantra. Vasugupta and Abhinavagupta are the celebrated exponents of this system, which has, because of its esoteric contribution to the subtle apprehension of Mantras, demanded time- tested veneration from the Yogis of all times.

Here, a word for the Yogis. The term Yogi has often been used to mean comprehensibly anyone between a careerist mendicant, a physical culturist with some skill in gymnastical posturing, a manager of a massag- ing club or meditation club, or a relaxing centre, to a spiritualist and a Realised Man. It is often forgotten that Patanjali, the Master, who left the first systematised instructions on Yoga, talks of Yoga as a method of exerting control over the mind, so that the power of Will becomes free of

emotional tensions, and attains perfect objective freedom to be applied for the attainment of a given aim. Thus, again and again, the archer's illustration has been used in making the aim and the mechanics of Yogapointed-sharp. Single-mindedness is the first essential to Yogic success. It is not enough to take into consideration merely the target, or the 'hit' itself. Yoga includes a number of preparatory and technical points to be taken care of for success. For instance, the technical care taken for shaping the bow, testing the string, making the arrow, sharpening the arrow and the bow, selecting length of the arrow and the bow in proportion to the distance from size of the object of the hunt, the speed, direc- tion and nature of the wind which the arrow has to cut through, and the behaviour of the feathers or any other material that would assist in direct- ing the progress of the arrow from the point of discharge to the point of impact; all this, and many more subtle points, have to be taken into consideration before an experienced archer could bring his training into full force for achieving his objective without fail. The size, weight, length and tension of his bows and arrows would not be the same whilst shooting a bird, a deer, or a tiger. He often goes to kill a tiger with only one arrow in hand. The second, third or the hundredth arrow in his quiver, would be of no use to him any way, as any tiger-hunter would agree. His failure in hitting means his end anyhow. The author had the experience of one such hunt by an Amerindian youth of the Wai-Wai tribe. He had gone out to kill a Jaguar with only one arrow in hand. He brought the dead Jaguar back to the camp.

The Yogi trains his faculty of attention. This is his weapon, his armour's deadliest, surest 'killer'. It is not an atmospheric or environ- mental attack. It is pointed; it hits a point. the point, where the alter- native of a 'second' is not possible. With attention sharpened to a point, as the tip of an arrow, he hits his 'Aim' (whatever it is), and the 'objec- tive' is his. Here is no place for subjectivity, metaphysics or mystery. Thus the Togi cannot afford to be 'vague' or lacadaisical. He has to be 'on the point', dead sharp, all the time. He has to be objective and objective alone. Yoga is a process of sharpening the Will. Yoga is attaining a perfect skill.

Thus the mechanics of Yoga depends on objectivity. Gila says "Toga is the skill in attaining objectives;"20 but the Yogi's object of attainment is the faculty of realising the One in all, the faculty of treating all lives as dearly as one's own; development of an attitude towards life, through which mere success in personal acquisition and proprietorship would appear as childish indiscretion. This state of subjectivity of mind is the objective of the Yogi; and Yoga is the skill one attains in mastering this process, the process of living in a state of pure subjectivity, of realising the ultimate facts about the first-person singular number. It is in thissense that a Yogi attaches supreme value to perfection. He has to be dead right. He has to be dead right about the Mantra he contemplates. He has to be dead right in its pronunciation, as well as in its enunciation. The Mantra is reflective of his aspirations. The Mantra is the trans- figuration of his existence, and the values of the existence. And the Mantra is sense transfigured into sound. Sound, and sound pronunciation, are of vital importance to him. Hence the knowledge of Sphota is important to him.

Mandana Miśra (of the Brahmasiddhi) accepts Sphota as a firm belief in the unchallenged supremacy of sound. When great Advaitins (monists) like Samkara believed in (Brahmadvaita) Brahma being the Supreme Single Real Truth, Mandana Miśra believed, "The word is Brahma, the word is all."23 This was later refuted by Sureśvarācārya, another great follower of Samkara. Their debate on Abhāsavāda and Pratibimba-vāda is well known in Saiva-Advaita metaphysics. But, in this context, we could very well do without it.

'Sphota', as has been said, originally was a grammatical concept dealt by Panini with reference to etymology. The idea was so novel, so engrossing, that both the Nyaya and Mimänsä systems made use of this. We have seen that the monistic system of Vedanta holds Sphota's conclusions as supremely significant in as much as it points that Sound alone is the single reality, which, when translated, would mean Nada is Brahman (Sound is the Immense).

Speaking of Sphota, under his exposition of the Nyaya system, Dr. Radhakrishnan comments :

The fact of meaning is explained by the grammarians on the theory of the Sphota. According to it any single letter, C, O, W, or all the letters, cow, cannot produce the knowledge of a thing corresponding to the word, since each letter perishes as soon as it is produced. Even if the last letter is aided by the impressions left by the preceding ones, a number of letters cannot explain the cognition of a thing. There must be something over and above the letters by which the knowledge is produced, and that is the Sphota, or the essence of sound revealed by letter, word or sentence. This sound-essence produces the cognition of the thing. A single letter, unless it is a complete word, can signify anything. The advocates of Padaşphota (evolution of word-sense from sound) argue that only a pada, or a word, can signify a meaning, while those of Vakyasphota (evolution of sentence-sense from sound) hold that only a Vakya, or a sentence, can signify a complete meaning. According to the latter, a sentence is the beginning of speech, while words are parts of sentences, and letters parts of words. Sphota, or sound-essence, is said to be eternal and self- existent (in principle) bearing a permanent relation to the thing signified by it. Letters, words and sentences manifest but do not produce, the eternal meanings. The Naiyayikas hold that what-ever is significant is a word; and we become cognisant of its signification when we hear the last letter of the word. On hearing the last letter 'W', we recollect the previous ones, C, O, and grasp the whole word by the mind; and we cognise the object by means of the conventional association between the word and the object,24 (The comments within brackets are the author's.)

Mere casuistry? So it appears. Yet, it is not. All types of analysis, at a subjective state, appear to be casuistry to (a) the impatient; and to (b) the materialists' propensity for
hurry, short-cut and 'practicalness'. Yet the thought machine's accuracy depends on refinement; and refine- ment depends on subtle distinctions of subjectivity, which is so bafflingly brushed aside by an accusing outburst-'casuistry'!

This poses a challenge to the mechanics of comprehension: com- prehension of letter, to word, to sentence, to thought chain, logic and syllogisms. Comprehension is a natural process only at the start. But, later on this faculty has to be refined, brushed, cut into shape, rendered more sensitive than even computers and seismographs. Suggestiveness, inferences and gestures gain expressions through alert comprehensive awareness. Most of the world's misery is traceable to the modern gap of communication between family members, social members, and in the political field between the ruling few and the ruled multitude. Our articulated language must be comprehensible, realistic and fruitful.

How from a set of mere alphabets different thought-links transfigure into comprehensible units and how those units get arrayed in an order, and complete a thought unit, is an amazing discovery of the Hindu mind. To pause and think on this phenomenon called for an extremely sensitive faculty of honesty of purpose. Such dedicated application could be mastered only by those who could reach a mediative awareness of sub- jective responses.

The 'moment', when sense transfigures from component sounds, and becomes self-articulated-the moment of 'bubbling', 'blooming', 'coming into meaning', is the moment of Sphota. It is Sphota. Articulation. The bud blooms into blossom by passing through Sphota; the chick winglings of the wren or of the cuckoo break the bar of dumbness and reach sound before articulated cooings by passing through $phota; the dawn aurora long before the appearance of the sun fills with faint blushes of the hesitant articulation of colours, and light passes through the stage of Sphota. As a line is filled with points alone, so is Sphota filled with the urge of meaningfulness. Some of these pin-points of conscious efforts are comprehended; some not; some realised, and articulated; some not; in the ever winding Sense-Time-stream some moments of sense become realised, and articulated, some remain unrealised, and mute.

It has been recorded by biographers of Shelley, on the basis of evidenceprovided by

strangely sensitive poet to put himself all out, even to the point of suicidal peril, to grasp the exact 'moment' when life passes out, and death ushers in (Symonds: Shelley; Maurois: Ariel). It has often appeared to me, similarly, as something very remarkable, how mere sound could be used for perfectly meaningful communication. When does sound cease to be sound; and come to be charged with meaning?

Simple familar words like 'put', 'walk', 'might', 'light' convey un- familiar and sublime thought images, and prove that words might be formed of the same alphabets, and

arranged in the identical way, yet the same words change their meaningfulness both in time and space dimen- sions. Othello says, "Put out the light, and then put out the light," and the word 'put' fills dumbness with a new meaning. Or when Macbeth cries in suppressed agony, "Life is but a walking shadow" the simple verb 'walk' assumes new dimensions. In

"The desire of the moth for the star,

Of the night for the morrow"

the meaningfulness of the concept of 'Night' assumes quite unknown dimen- sions. Or, the nuances of the word Light in Goethe's 'Light, more Light' are quite beyond what the dictionary authorises the word light to articulate. Sound is a miracle, with a miraculous power of conveying sense, the modulations of its meaningfulness depends on the transcendental plans from which its author pulls it out, as it were, from the wombs of silence. Meanings of words and sounds of the same words, says Kālidāsa, are as intimately related as Šiva and Sakti.

Even silences have communicative value, and meaning. Silence could be most articulate. When does the moon cease to be a moon, and become light? When does an animal, reproducing another, cease to be an animal and become an involved

concern,
e.g., a mother, or a father? When does the home, the world, the mind cease to be objective units, and fill themselves with a subjective involvement? When does thought become memory; and memory become a song or a curse; a song or a curse become

penance or poison to my living? When does a piece of stone become a god; a river become a mother; a country become pride; a book become a matter of life and death; a blade of grass become poetry; a peasant become my brother; a worker my blood?

As I think of these, I also refuse to get lost in sentimentalism. I want to probe into, to dig into, to analyse, to understand. And this theory of Sphota assists me tremendously in comprehending how much does the 'seen' depend on the 'felt'; how much does the 'felt' depend on the 'comprehended' and how much, how very much, does the 'comprehended' depend on a bubble of apperceptivity blooming in its multi-coloured senseon the void of a moment, the moment of Sphota. Apprehension becoming comprehension is an engaging enquiry.

"No word is conceivable as elementary, as the Sphotavadins would have it". No 'proof' in support of this could be final. Feeling is the only proof. In all essential comprehension the personal faculty alone supplies the last judgement. To ignore, is to enter the deluge. (Savara Svämin, the famous commentator on Jaimini, mentions no proof. He only quotes the name of Upavarṣa as his authority regarding Sphota.)

Sphota, a grammatical necessity in establishing etymology, came handy also to the Hindu logicians (Navya-Nyaya) in classifying genus and species, and in establishing synonyms and antonyms. The Miman- sakas, too, found the theory quite revealing in commenting on the ratio- nale behind uttering a chant (Mantra). We have already shown that Mantras alone, without their Sphota comprehension, are of no use. Such Mantras bear no results. In other words the Mimänsakas esta- blished the verity of the relation between the uttered sound and the consequent spiritual effect. Such effects form a cosmic communicative force, and relate the seen with the unseen, the felt with the unfelt. This explains the reason why great spiritualists insist on the correct way of pronouncing a given Mantra for Japa. "Mimänsakas generally maintain that no part of a word or sentence by itself, or along with the rest, can produce the whole meaning of a word or sentence, which is unity. So this school says that over and above these

as a whole, which brought up into consciousness by the different sounds of the word (or words of the same sentence) produces the cognition of what is meant by the word (or sentence) as a whole." In other words a Mantra becomes a living sound; that sound becomes meaning; meaning becomes Truth, and Truth becomes Realisation.

The sound Aum, for instance, in Sphota conveys a realisable living truth. Without Sphota, it is a mere sound; and as such it could never mean anything to the inner spirit, that seeks. It is in the vivified enlighten- ment of the fullest knowledge of the sound structure of Aum that the thrill of revelation lies. This particular moment of thrill of comprehension has been developed further in another school known as Spanda which
we discuss later on. But it is very much dependent on the understanding of Sphota. What is Sphota in the world of sounds, is Spanda in the field of revelation. Of that later on.

In conclusion a passage on Sphota from Dr. S. N. Sastri's 'Philosophy of Saivism', may be quoted:

The contention that the residual impressions of letter-cognitions persist, and that they may have this function, is of no avail, sinceresidual impressions are known to have the functions of recalling their own causes (here the letter-cognitions); and there is no justification of imposing another function on them. Though Sphota or Sakti or Nada is manifested by each letter, meaning as a whole is not fully manifest therewith; for it is manifested bit by bit by each succeeding letter as occurring in a particular sequence; the manifestation by the preceding letter, or set of letters, is a preparation for the manifestation of the succeeding letter, till the word is completed. Similar is the case in the expression of mean- ing by the words of a sentence. The Siddhantin thus favours not a mere diversity but a unity progressively manifested in diversity."7

Human realisation on unity has to be an outcome of diversity. To the materialist, as well as to the sentimental, this unity is lumped together as one, which does not solve

the problem of arriving at a peaceful con- clusion. To the transcendental realist the process of arriving at the final unity leads through a logical method of analysis of the nature and function of matter and spirit. The Siddhantins follow the latter course and

call this unit as Śiva. Śivată connotes this finality of Oneness, often confused as Sameness.

The Theory of $phota has indeed a great bearing on Saivism. It explains the impact of Sphota on the process of understanding this fact of reaching Oneness through a series of diverse entities. It explains a moment of illumination, bursting into a fullness of meaning and purpose. A meaningfulness dawns on the minds, as it were. It explains what the Yogi seeks in Samadhi, and terms as Siddhi or the moment of 'success'. Liboration takes a new meaning: it is the conscious grasp of the fact that Joy is One; Joy and Sorrow is One. All numbers proceed from One. Besides contributing all these significant theses to the mental and spiritual world of Absolute Realisation, a world of transcendental peace, where all problems reach a quietude of solution, the theory

of

Sphota also makes a far more meaningful contribution, as we have noted, to the understanding of the Saivic signs, icons and symbols. The Nada and the Bindu icons are expressed in the Lingam and the circular plate or pattam.

Let us at this juncture reiterate what has been stated again and again in our study of the cultural history of the emergence of Saivism. The ritualistic forms of the images used for ritualistic purpose had been subjected to a lot of alien influences to which India has been exposed during the period 1100 B.c. to 1100 A.D. The political upheavalssuffered by the Greco-Oriental empires during this period made large populations seek shelter in more peaceful India. Gradually they established their community, empires, laws; and through these changes, the religious life of the Vedic Hindus too underwent changes, not always approved by the strictest forms of the Vedas. The various Smrtis and some of the Upanisads confirm this. We have noted the flush of new literature that flooded the socio-religious life of the Hindus. We have the

Grhya Sûtras, the Smrtis and the Upanisads. It is quite expected that such powerful religions as had projected Moloch, Marduk, Ishtar, Osiris, Isis, Aphrodite, Tanit, Ba'al as gods and goddesses must have had their own sway, particularly when the new empires such as those of the Răştrakutas, Chelas, Cholas, Gurjaras, Huns, Kushānas, Palhavas, Kalachuris, Sungas, Kanvas, Śiśunagas, and many others of the Parthian and the Greek origins had established, or trying to establish, their own ways. It is not at all surprising that at this time new forms of religions had been trying to push out the established Vedic Brahmanism, and create and establish its own caste aristocracy. The new Brahmins like the Cit- pāvanas, Bhumihāras, Acāryas, Migras and the Magas, the new Ksatriyas like the Ugra-Ksatriyas, the Rajputs, the Rajavansis, Šaka-Sinas, Bundelas were making caste system narrow, rigid, clannish and complex [cf., Legend of Sarasvati in Devi Bhagavatam, Skanda Purāṇa (Reva-Khanda)].

It is not at all surprising that they found Saivism the easiest medium to promote their phallic images and forms. They knew that Vedism would not absorb them; and Buddhism was out of their grain. It is not at all surprising that whilst the purer form of Rudra and Siva worship had traditionally been engaging the attention of the devout, the Greco- Oriental phallic forms too were trying to carve out a place, and claim recognition, as well as acceptance, in such forms of theology as came to be known as the Käpälins, Mäheśvaras, Pasupatas, Vaikhanasas, Aghoras, etc. We hear of semi-Aryan races as the Pisacas, Guhyakas, Siddhas, Gandharvas, Nagas, Asuras, Daityas, and the other sectarians as Kala- keyas, Mauryas, Haihayas, Damaras, names quite foreign to the Vedic Aryan traditions, but quite frequently mentioned in the Puranas with strange legends attached. Bhakti was known to the Hindus, who had the training of the Agamas, and the Nigamas; Śaivism too was known to them; but the sudden treatises that advocated and laid down rules for temple-building, image-making and metal-casting for the obvious purpose of a new form of worship, gave us the famous Sun-temples of Kashmir, Indraprastha, Pushkar, Puri, Somnath, etc. Sukra-Smrti, Brhatkatha, Devala-Smrti, and a number of sectarian Purāṇas support the above view.

Thus we have to recognise that a vast area of phallicism with phallic rites and phallic images was being covered under the umbrella of Saivism. This is the reason why we hear of drastic warnings againstsome of the Siśna (Phallus) worshippers, Kāpālins, Pasupatas and Aghoras. The warnings are sounded unbrokenly from the Ṛg Vedic days to the Purana days. The Phallic in Hinduism is a historical fact, but it is also an entirely denounced fact. Śaivism is quite away from the phallic in spite of many formal similarities which could legitimately create confusion in uninitiated minds. I shall refer in this connection to only three archaeological evidences and try to bring out the point. (1) At Thuburbo Majus near Carthage amongst the ruins has been found a plaque with a great Crescent symbol, a Damarů or Vajra Symbol, with the tridentic motif and a symbolic female forms (see Plate 33). This and (2) the stone form of the stele of Hammurabi-code (see Plate 29A) leave no doubt about the fact that at least a section of the phallic forms found now in India are the evidences of the infiltration of Greco-oriental trends, trying to build a home in the world of the Hindus under the embracing philosophy of Saivism. But the attempt did not succeed. The rock of Saivism proved too strong. (3) A comparative study of the carved god Cernunous on the Gundestrup Bow130 (see Plate 13), and the Śiva Pasupati figure discovered at Mohenjo-daro (see Plate 12) similarly, show how theological images of phallic symbolism moved from end to end of the Eurasian land formation. Śaivism has been a thing apart from these formal phallic images.

To come back to our description of the design of Nada and Bindu, and to the Spanda-theory. The Nada-Bindu theory of Spanda, we have already noted, has given the iconic sign of the crescent and the star so well known as Siva's decorative moon-sign. It also signifies Nada and Bindu: the crescent (a part, a kala), the Nada sign; and the star the Bindu sign. The gradually tapering horn-like ends of the crescent signify the ultimate abstraction of all knowledge about matter; its coming into being, and its going out of being.

Sphota as a theory fully explains such descriptive names of the Siva idea as Svayambhu, that which came into being by itself. Meaning does. Speech, Sound and Meaning are so compact in oneness that meaningful- ness must be described as 'coming by itself'. All Nadas find meaning, and reach a Bindu, a form, the form this time is $phota, a meaningfulness. Thus Siva, the Quiet One, is 'of itself', Svayam-bhů. He is Siva; he is Svayam-bhu; he is Aum, the meaningful sound; Sarva, the 'All'; the master-sound, the master-speech, the master-articulate, Gih (speech)-Isa (lord), i.e., Girisa.

IV

Pasa and the Hindu Concept of Sin

Apart from the Sphota theory and its contribution to the world of the Siddhantin, there is another theory of Pasa-Pašu and Pati: we have ex- plained this before. But as we have to return to it again when we discuss Vira-Saivism of Vasava, we postpone this topic.

Souls are by nature beyond any limit, yet souls gather experience with- in limits. Souls, infinite by nature, find that infinity is curtailed in life, as souls are bound to act from within the limits of the body-experience or sense-experience. Thus Souls consider the bodies as traps. They feel limited. They feel their freedom curtailed. Soul and body form a naturally conflicting relationship (Nitya-Vairî).

The Hindu concept of this Nitya-Vaira relation, a relation of challenge to the existence, a source of congenital conflict, makes the Hindu meet Life as a fighter. He knows that through the very process of birth Man has been destined to solve a conflict, "Am I for here and now, or is there a Beyond for which life is a preparation?" Unable to face this problem some succumb to it and perish; whilst some seek help, and pray for mercy; some, like Kṛṣṇa, say, "Fight; stand up and meet the challenge; fight with a passion of duty, and without a passion for ulterior selfish gains." The concept of 'constant challenge' is totally different from the concept of 'Sin'. There is no word in the Vedic

Sanskrt for exactly translating the semetic concept of Sin. Sin is translated in Sanskrt as Papa; but the concept of Papa in Hindu thought is a fundamental constitute of the 'being', and not an acquired defect inherited from any 'fall from com- mand'. How this vigorous concept of 'challenge' and 'fight' has been tamed into the existing Hindu acquiescence to meekness, subser- vience, and prostration is a quite different tale of successive misfortunes and cultural disasters. Hindus of the pre-Buddhist and post-Buddhist

The Alphabetic achievement of Sphota has been most significantly expressed in expressing the sound A-u-m in a single letter-design con- taining the sign of crescent-and-dot, i.e., Nada and Bindu. The letter a in the Nagari script is a combination of the two vowels-A and U or A and O. To complete this sound for representing A-u-m the sign of has to be added to it. It may be written as a or or or ; but the inevitable sign of Nāda and Bindu has to be present in all cases, and denote that the letter combination retains the sublimest meaning of all sound-meaning combination. This letter-design holds within it the Nada-Bindu truth of the Siva-principles. The Siva icon, the Siva Lingam or the Siva-sound all three represent the truth of Nada and Bindu. era, the

societies of pre-Alexander and post-Kanişka, were as different as Europe before and after Attila. We must not forget that in the old world the cultural influence of the Indian subcontinent was immense, overwhelming and of an abiding nature. Such vitality, vigour and dynamism cannot be associated with the guilty-minded defeatism of the concept of 'Sin'. "You are the progenies of Immortality," cried the vigorous Rg Veda. "You are the tenants of a spiritual habitat." In contrast to the concept of Sin, the original Hindu concept of the Nitya- Vairi state, or the concept of 'constant challenge', charges life with a responsibility for preparedness against a natural foe which, left unattended, is bound to spell disaster to the very purpose of Life. "Rise up; awake; be at peace, only after realising what you are to realise."31 The Hindu before the Buddha and the Hindu after Kanishka present indeed a metamorphosis of a Perissodactyla turned into a horse.

For a full picture of the Hindu concept of Sin one has to go into the Hindu concept of the Gunas, the Bonds, the Pāśa. The body is bounded by its limits. Limits are imposed as snares as animals, or a rope around a cow, or brakes to a car. These limitations of the sense-perceptions and emotions are known as the Bonds or Pasa. These are 'cut
through' by effort. Self-effort. But the degradation implied in Sin expects us to kneel, pray, and beseech pardon against atonement, and suffering sacrifices.

As we speak of copper, we also speak of verdigris. Don't we? As we speak of paddy, we speak of the husk also; as we speak of water, we speak of something other than just H,O. Innate in the thing itself the impurities (the non-things) are inevitably present. Šiva is the only 'Pure- in-Itself', 'It-in-Itself', Sattva. So, speaking of the man, we presuppose that which unmans the Man. Man, the son of Light, is also darkness. Man, the creation of the Perfect, also imperfect; charged with the 'original' sin as it were. This is the original Papam, Kalusa, referred to in the Gîtä as Nitya-Vairi,32 It is something present in the thing itself as other than the thing; but not it; it is rather a denial of its spirit. By its presence it hampers the thing being called purely 'it'. The humans are not men because of some contraries; light is not full, because of obstructive elements. This innate impurity is material; and is called Anava, cogenital, atomic. The presence of this limitation hampers the soul to cognise its own pure nature. This could also be Taijasa, or spiritual. Soul is pervasive, or Vi-bhů. This pervasiveness becomes limited due to the presence
of Anava-Mala, or Anava-Paka, or material atomic 'bonds' known as 'impurities'. The presence of this original set-back in the form of 'impurities', demands action for purification; else its very presence would discharge chained reactions as consequences, as toxic reactions from poisonous presence, like the presence of a touch of brass, or copper, or water in pure iron. What the consequences wouldlead to, none could adequately anticipate. By thinking clearly, and acting along the right path, for gaining experience alone, the Anava-Mala could be removed; in other words, freedom from Anava-Pasa could be attained. Righteousness is not merely a virtue, not even a

medicine, but the just weapon to cut through the underbush that the mangrove-area of Life's outer shores present. No progress without righteousness.

Karma-Pasa

Attempts made by man to effect this freedom, or liberation are directed through action, known as Karma. Karma, by its nature, is limited by bonds or Pasas. The consequences of Karma are too many, coming at many stages; and releasing a chained series of reactions. These, as Bonds, hamper progress although these are meant for progress. Able and correct guidance of Karma is called for achieving progress. Failure of choosing the right way, instead of liberating, binds closer and closer. This is known as Karma-Pasa. This concept of Karma, as we now see it, is a far distant cry, a horse of a different colour, from the usual connotation of Karma as Fate. Hindu theory of Karma has the least to do with the Greek idea of Nemesis or Destiny. All effects are but sequences of Karma, and there is no escape from consequences of actions taken. Karma has to be; action is inherent in life. The one who is lazy, and does not act, is still acting by non-acting; and he, of course, derives the consequences of non-acting. The one who is engaged in acting contrary to others is also acting. He too is subject to consequences. He who suffers wrong- doing is as much subject to consequences as the one who acts wrong, or the one against whom the wrong is acted. There is no escape; no running away.

The success of Karma engenders joy; its failure engenders sorrow. Joy and sorrow by their nature discharge energy or inertia, vitality or sloth. The organic impurity calls for active participation; participation calls for action; action engenders feeling and mental reaction; mental reaction involves a sense of identification. The identified alone enjoys the vigour of energy. This involvement in mental reaction of the subjec- tive attitude to an objective phenomenon is known as the third bond, or the third Pasa. It has the special name of Maya Pasa, the 'bond of involvement'.

Yet this involvement leading to identification might lead to identifying the purity of Anava with soul. To realise the pervasiveness of Vibhů, is to expound the Self from the 'limited' experience to reach the 'unlimited', and transcend the sense-faculties to
omnipotence and omniscience. The acquisition of these two powers are, however, open to the tempting games of Maya. Yogis often delight in miracles, and by doing so losethemselves in worldly praise. Vijñāna Bhiksu, the commentator of Patanjali enjoins 'silence' for the Yogis, regarding his powers.

Thus there are two aspects of Maya: Maya that binds, and Maya that liberates. Love that becomes selfish and narrow; and love that becomes liberal, expansive and spiritually universal. We know of these as Asuddha- Maya (Maya-in-complex), and Suddha-Maya. Suddha-Maya illuminates and liberates; and the lack of it, leads to ignorance; and ignorance creates the Anava Pāśa.

Though Asuddha-Maya (Maya-in-complex) too brings about knowledge and action through Kala etc., it serves only to delude, since that knowledge is of the particular, and leads to the super- imposition of the self on the not-self, whereas the knowledge brought about by the Maha-Maya (Suddha-Maya) is extensive know- ledge of all things together; further, the latter is of pure entities like Siva, and comes through knowledge imparted by doctrinal works; hence Suddha-Maya produces real wisdom.33

This means that in realising the Ultimate and the Supreme, the impurities (Anava) have to be sublimated, and made 'Pure'. In turn, this assists the recognition of the Idea as Reality. Failing this a fall from the Ideal is inevitable. This leads the Siddhantin very close to the Vedantic Advaita or monistic idealism. It is in this sense that the followers of Samkarācārya call themselves Śaivas.

There are souls which are limited by all the three kinds of Pasa. Such souls are known as Sakalas. Sakala becomes Pralaya-Kala by getting over the bond of Maya, but retaining Karma and Anava. When Karma impurities are done away with, what

remains is Anava alone. Anava alone is Vijnana-Kala which is Suddha-Maya's natural abode.

The Saiva Siddhanta's concept of 'Sin' is this bunch of the three bonds: Anava (or Avidya or Ignorance); Karma and Maya. This is innate and unavoidable in Matter and material body, which is purified by consciousness, which is a property of the soul. Soul and Matter together is the world, which may well be a challenge, but not an illusion.

O lovely visage: I never said that an illusion has to be worshipped. It is the conscious support of the illusion which deserves worship. Illusion, energy and other like-words merely point to a particular- ised state. It is the worship of the Immensity which is aimed at through such words as 'illusion',

The Samsara is beginningless, and is made of such realities as matter and soul. Life has a meaning, and existence a purpose. It is to meet the challenges of Avidya or ignorance, and resurrect the purity of the be- muddled soul. Will is the helper. Will assists in man's efforts. Yet,after all his efforts Man still needs a higher transcendental encourage- ment, a dynamic inspiration. This is Grace. Without Grace human efforts could not be enough. Life's impurities chase life's efforts. The chimney cannot work itself clean. Grace has to be prayed for. A stage has to be crossed. A Koşa has to be shed behind. Śiva expects every man to exert, and realise through his own efforts.35

Grace

This Grace emanates from the Real Sattva. Its Grace alone is Grace. Śiva is the Reality conceding this Grace. Hence we accept Śiva as God in Reality. He blesses. He helps. He is Grace in form. He seeks our love. It is a personal tie between the devotee and God. Grace of God is essential. Personal effort alone, though the drive comes from God, is not enough.

Spiritual grace originates from the divine ground of all beings, and it is given for the purpose of helping man to achieve his final end, which is to return out of time and selfhood to that Ground.

God's blessings are necessary. The blessings shower on innocence. Innocence is attained by abject, open, unreserved devotion, of which much has been said in the chapter on Bhakti. We shall return to the Śaiva hymnals and their emotional motive towards this abject hankering for the grace of the great personal God, Śiva.
It is notable that Saiva metaphysics bases itself on the intellectual per- ception of metaphysical mysteries. It probes to a great depth and with infinite subtlety such subjective ideas as the Sphota theory conveys. It takes into account the materialistic analysis of Samkhya, and the idealistic monism of Vedanta. Yet ultimately it resorts to the personal appeal to a God who could be befriended. Saivism as the apex of Bhakti fervently depends on the Grace of the Divine Will, so that all our activities finally could lead us to reducing our own selves to a state of humbleness throughout life's active involvement and participation. Cultivate the modesty of the 'able'; not of the servile.

Intellectual analysis as a process is too terse to sympathise with human weakness and afford it the desired sustenance. Materialistic approach, equally, is forbiddingly rigid. Pure spiritualism borders asceticism. The common man needs some god who could prove to be of some benign influence on the day-to-day domestic sorrows and pains, failings and falls, of which life is full. Who is this God? What is He? How Real is He? Questions throb like stars in a dark night.

God

1. The idea of God has been differently discussed in the different systems. Gautama in his system of Nyaya accepts God as a personal being. He possesses the three substantive qualities of being Sat-Cit-Anandam (Reality-Consciousness-Joy). There is no demerit (Adharma) in God; he is devoid of false knowledge (Mithya-Jñana) or

mistake. Merit, Knowledge and Equanimous Poise (Dharma; Jnana; Samadhi-Sampad) are inherent in God.

He is the Act and its fulfilment; and He it is, who continues to act through beings created through His acts, as a father does through his child- ren, who are the consequences of his act. He is omniscient, intelligent and endowed with eternal cognition. He is much more than the power which the Yogis attain; the mystical perception which the intelligent acquire. He apprehends with an unflinching, non-dependent and non- reacting intelligence, which, remaining steady, steadies the unsteady in the flux of Samsara. For this He has to be approached; because He has His desire, the desire to be in His acts, and in the activated beings; and to watch the beings engaged in the act. He is the act, actor and active power; the rest, by remaining passive to be acted on, fulfils the divine Will.37

2. Kanāda in his system of Vaiśeşika supplies the mechanics of analysis, and does not go beyond what matter is; what are its nature and constituents. Of course, this kind of analysis, mostly metaphysical, as distinct from the physical, is going to be subjective. But neither in ancient nor in modern times has the atomic theory been 'proved'.38 To the uninitiated common man nuclear theories are subjective. We are grateful to the ancients in the sense that the modern is its outcome. Atomism, which considers an atom not as a 'thing', but as a 'system', looks upon the atom as a solar-system in miniature, where a cultural mass keeps the floating masses busy around it through the same 'force' which we call gravitation. The 'character' of the atomic unit is supposed to be a contribution from 'ether', again, a substance, the nature of which is a grand-guess from inferences. No verification is possible. But through this discovery the ancient idea of animism has received a shock. Yet, its acceptance is more conceptual than perceptual. As a principle it has been found workable, but most of it remains a mystery still. Until this mystery is solved, Vaiseṣika remains open to a God-concept. Dimension, conjunction, individuation, sequence, heaviness, viscidity, all being attri-butes to this system (supposedly final) of atom, the ultimate question re- mains,

whence all these, and how the primal selection before individuation is de ermined, and by what? Only a subjective meditative knowledge with powers of omniscience could reveal the secret.

3. This takes us to Yoga. Yoga says that the ultimate Truth is sub- jectively attainable through the faculties of meditation and concentration. Its language is silence; and it is impossible to communicate this realisation to others. The Yogi experiences and expresses it through skilful acts. Words remain mute.

4. And we stop at a blind alley. This alley's end is reversed by Kapila in the system of Samkhya. Samkhya's conception of liberation means a release from the phenomenal world; release from its bondage and appearances; release from the conjunction and
disjunction of Puruşa and Prakṛti. Yet, Samkhya's Puruṣa, as well as all the relatively phenomenal aspects of the Puruşa, connote, in the sphere of mystic delight, nothing but the ephemeral concept of God. Samkhya's Puruşa is supposed to be indifferent to Samsara. This view resembles the Buddhistic theory of detachment. But this indifference does not solve other difficulties. This indifference may be logically understandable; it also proves to be very useful for a rational approach to Truth through logic. But indifference does not solve the mystery of involvement. How to explain that?

The atomic theory of Kanāda tries to explain by introducing an ethereal hypothesis. The fact is that truth is a transcendental realisation. Something, in which the finality of causation is reached, has to transcend form, matter and phenomenal changes. There is
not only something changeless and causeless, but also ultimate in conscious will and interest. Mere validity is not even filling; most certainly it is not fulfilling. Intuitive awareness alone does not fill up the gap between intelligence and feeling, matter and consciousness.

Reason is subordinated to intuition. Life cannot be compre- hended in its fullness by logical reason. Self-consciousness is not the ultimate category of the universe. There is

something transcending the consciousness of self to which many names are given- Intuition, Revelation, Cosmic Consciousness and God-vision. We cannot describe it adequately, so we call it Super-consciousness. When we, now and then, have glimpses of the higher form, we feel that it involves a purer illumination and a wider compass. As the difference between mere consciousness and self-consciousness constitutes the wide gulf separating the animal from man, so the difference between self- consciousness and superconsciousness constitutes all the difference between man as he is and man as he ought to be. The philosophy of India takes the stand on the spirit which is above mere logic, and holds that culture based on mere logic or science may be efficient, but, cannot be inspiring.39 (The italics are mine.)

It is not enough. A culture tired of its own efficiency is now crying, "Enough is not enough." It wants something more. This cry finds a solace in God, which Yoga says is attainable as transcendental peace,and Samkhya speaks of as release, and the

Buddhist
calls Liberation and
Nirvana.

Samkhya's need is for an administrative drive behind the arranged logic; an inspiring will to make the drive purposive and consciously participating. This is Isvara,
Samkhya's God, a name attributed in Hindu mythology to Śiva alone; and Prakrti is Iśvari.

5. The Siddhantin's concept of Siva as the Positive Absolute that transcends the Gunas, fits in with Samkhya's Isvara, as with the God of the early Christians, for whom God, the Son, had not yet overwhelmed, and pushed back God, the Father. Further, Sämkhya's dualism of Puruşa and Prakyti fits in with the Siddhantin's dualism of Isvara and Isvari, Śiva and Sakti, or Siva and Sati, or Sat and Cit. But Samkhya does not factually mention God, because Samkhya believes in the infinity and eternity of the souls moving in an uninterrupted chain. Samkhya speaks of the subtle bodies that

move with the subtle souls in interminable chains, and of these bodies, which in material gross form the ultimate, are known as Linga-Deha.

This Linga-Deha of Samkhya has been described in the Hindu myths. The legend of the curse of Bhrgu, included later in the chapter on Śiva- Myths, explains the Linga-Deha. In the Yoga-Vasistha,40 Ṛsi Vasistha asks of Śiva about the forms of worship. Śiva advises Vasistha that of all forms of worship Anta-r-Linga worship, or worshipping mentally the Ultimate Reality in its subtle formlessness with spiritual accessories and offerings alone is the best. The conceptual Reality so worshipped is the Linga. Linga and Siva connote thus, a transcendental idea, and not what is rudely disposed of as phallic forms. Over-simplicity and in- stant analogies confuse metaphysical issues. Except in the case of those who have attained freedom, the existence and rebirth of Linga last for a whole world-period, at the end of which come quiescence and equili- brium.41 This Sämkhya concept as explained by a great scholar accounts for Siva's title as Kala (Time), and Pralaya-m-kara (Bringer of the end of things), and Sambhu (where things reach quiescence and equilibrium).

6. "Jaimini does not so much deny God as ignores him."42 This is because the Vedas speak of many gods, and never bother about 'the' God; and because Jaimini in Mimänsä is engaged with the rites of the Vedic gods. Dharma is real, Veda is eternal, and so Vedic gods are enough. Rites and sacrifices by their nature produce results. No beneficent God is really needed for bringing Dharma and Karma to perfect fruition. Life is produced by life, without divine interference. Atoms are not gods. An effortless God might or might not exist. If effort is eternity, what is God? Dharma and Adharma both could not be the characteristic of one. The great scholar Kumärila (8th cent.) criticises the logical view of Nyaya and rejects the necessity of a God; finds no utilityin it; and cannot accept any substantiation for a reasonable divine existence. In his 'Devatasvarupa Vicara' Apadeva asks, if atoms move by 'His' will, where from the will?44 If this be Adrsta (unforseen, or fate, or destiny), better we do not see it or think of seeing it, and know Adṛṣṭa itself to be God. Gods of the Vedas have corporeal

descriptions by way of linguistic decorations of praise. Deities are images; their descriptions are imaginary; the only reality to be really attended to is the Mantra.45 For the most vigorous and authentic exposition of gods, as means and not ends, one should refer to the words of Siva himself in the Yoga- Vasistha (dialogue between Vasistha and Maheśvara in Nirvana Prakaraṇa, First-half).

This again reminds us of the importance attached by the Sphota theory to the 'Realisation' of Mantra. Dr. Radhakrishnan laughs at a recent attempt by Dr. P. Sastri (Půrva Mimänsä, p. iii) to attribute to Jaimini the admission of God as a creator, though he admits that Jaimini does not accept God as a distributor of rewards. How could 'Karma' be the cause of 'Fruit' if God were to distribute the 'Fruit'? The position indeed would be untenable.. Thus later writers, realising the want of reality in Jaimini's stand, attempt to smuggle in God into Mimänsä. Law of Karma and God both cannot be confirmed by any kind of meta- physical somersault.46 Vedanta's God is the finality of Good; so Mimänsakas of later dates (like Laugakṣi Bhaskara) attempt to cover up by saying that sacrifice is dedicated to honour the Supreme God. But then, Who is He according to Mimänsä of Jaimini?

7. For Vädarayana, the author of the Vedanta system, God is not required to be discussed, as an author is not required to be discussed when his creation itself is there. This is so because both the creator and the created is one single truth, although seen through in a variety of shades. The world is Brahman's, and Brahman is the world. (How very similar to the idea of Logos!) We know how the analogy of the spider and its web is given by Samkara to expound this very relation between the cause and the caused. The web comes out of the spider; and goes back into it with natural facility inherent in it. Other effects need a cause; but the ultimate cause swallows up cause and effect in a gulp. It becomes cause and effect compact in One. He distinguishes between a qualified Brah- man and an unqualified Absolute state of Oneness. The qualified state of Brahman supplies the cause of being to be springing out of its assumed qualities (Gunas). This Saguna Brahman is Isvara, the creator in the role of creation.

Like Kant he proves the presence of Isvara. "The ideal of logic compels us to assume the reality of a perfect subject, to whom all existence is related as an object." Samkara, like Kant, hits hard on the question of the futility of advancing proofs for the existence of God. If religion is what man thinks in his loneliness, God too is essentially the thinkers' secretthrough his own love. "He that loveth not, knoweth not God. For God is Love."48 "God I make my Love; Love I make my God; I know not else." It is not the passionate feeble empirical love that leaves the body tired, and spent out, and the mind in a state of flushed depression; such subjective Love does not send emotions screaming through a chaos of chain- ed series of outbursts of counter-actions and counter-feelings. God means a deep sense of quiescence and equilibrium that leads from strength to strength and creativity to creativity. This sense adds vigour to confidence, and confidence to life. Yoga-Vasistha has to relate the legend of King Padma and his queen Lila to bring home the point.

Love makes God personal; and this is Ramanuja's stand; the stand of Bhakti. Reality must have substance. It must be more than mere identity and subjectivity. Not logic alone, but experience, where the thrill of experience emerges as the subjectivity of the object and objectivity of the subject. Like the spider becoming the creator-created, God becomes the Subject-Object. The experience cannot become the experiencer. If it does, it attains an impossible state of non-entity. The character of Brahman is Real in being the abode of Sat (Reality), Cit (Consciousness), and Anandam (bliss). This realisation does not depend on the physical 'senses'; it is self-dependent and self-illuminating. It transcends all limits of senses. That which, like the world, has been created out of Love and Grace (Karuna) seeks to maintain the links of reciprocity alive and active, so that the aim of creation, as that of life, Icould be stated to have reached perfection. In this longing for seeking to be more perfect the mood of religiosity finds its meaningfulness.

Thou art That

In the Vedantic sentence Thou art That' an inherent illogic is pointed out by the Bhakti dualist Rāmānuja. He does not see in the statement Thou art That', any identity of singleness. He does not see that the sentence 'S is P' means S is S or P is P. As long as S is S and P is P, the sentence S is P is either redundant or complex. S is a subject; P is a predicate. A distinction is inherent. This distinction is the result of a judgement. The judge and the judged cannot be in reality the same, for all judgement presuggests distinction. In actual prayer and devotion, besides 'I' there must be the 'other'. The lover must feel a beloved.

Devotional religion is born of this haunting sense of otherness. We may know God, but there is always a something still more that seems unknown, and remains unspoken.... The difference bet- ween the Supreme as spirit and the Supreme as person is one of standpoint and not of essense.... Even those who regard personal-ity as the ultimate category of the Universe recognise that God is vast and mysterious, mighty and ultimate.50

Rāmānuja's explanation of Vedänta ends in finding and establishing a personal God. This is very important for our next stage in the stand of Saivism, namely in the study of Pratyabhijñā, a Kashmir Šaiva tradition. This we shall study in due course. Here we have seen how a Hindu arrives at the faith for a personal God underlying almost each system. Most of them suggest it; but some speak boldly. Rämänuja, Nimbärka, Mädhava, Caitanya do, like St. Augustine, St. Aquinas, St. John on the Cross, St. Theresa and the Shepherd of Hermes, Fenelon and many others like the great Sufis. So did the Tamil Acaryas of Agamas. For them Śiva was not merely an idea but a form.

In this connection we quote two memorable passages from two seers: Vyasa and Ramanuja. Vyasa says:

Lord of the World may pardon my three faults perpetrated through common frailty. I'imaged the intangible into form on the basis of Dhyana; I composed psalms, and

qualified thereby the unqualified; and lastly, by suggesting special pilgrimages I tampered with God's omnipresence.

Rāmānuja says:

The Parama-Atman, Śrinatha and Rama, the Lord of Janaki are one and the same, I know; yet I consider my all to be that lotus-eyed Räma, and no other.

These venerated exponents of Monism, as if to provide living illustrations of what Yoga Vasistha and Bhagavata Purana says about the use of images, and what Patanjali himself supports in his Yoga Sutra, break themselves away from their intellectual subjectivity, and proclaim how much they owed to their individual deities to which they had readily submitted so devotedly. This provides the greatest support to the efficacy and purposiveness of Bhakti.

Where then do Samkara and Rāmānuja converge? Once these two giants do, the rest would follow suit.

Samkara's statement "Brahman is the Truth; the world is an illusion," has been criticised again and again by all and sundry, be he a whale or a minnow. The Gitä has been interpreted in a hundred ways because of the diverse advocacies offered in this regard by these two.

Yet Samkara himself offers an explanation: (a) That', the Brahman, is "Thou', the 'Self'; and (b) 'Brahman' is the 'self'. Both these are Samkarite statements. The spirit that upholds the cosmos is numericallyidentical with the immortal element residing in individuated beings. The liquid he happens to swim in, and the moisture within the body of the swimmer, bear the same cosmic universality. "The air within the pot is the same free air outside," says Yoga-Vasistha. "But the independence of air has been subject to rise and fall because of its adherence to the pot." The functioning respiratory system does nothing more than main- tain steadily a link between the air without and the air within the breather. What we call the Mind is yet another link between the

individual self, or 'T' (Uttama-Puruşa in Panini grammar, i.e., First Person) that is aware, on the one hand, and the cosmic universal 'T' (Uttama-Puruşa in Samkhya, i.e.,
Purusottama of Gîta), which is awareness itself, on the other. I am conscious by the Power that makes all beings conscious. It is the Source of Universal consciousness.52 In this sense "That art Thou' is meaning- fully indicative of perfect Oneness. It is the truest statement about an established Identity.

Māyā

Then how to explain this flux known as the world, the Prapanca? Samkara says, 'Māya', translated (imperfectly) as Illusion. How could all this be due to mere Maya? Samkara's answer is interesting.

This world is. And it could be, therefore, seen from two points of view: either (1) the Brahman's; or, (2) the Self's. Seen from Brahman's point of view the world is Maya, a something apart, yet not perfectly so, as it is saturated with the spirit of Brahman, howsoever infinitesimally it may be. This Maya-ta, saturation (in the sense that a swimmer swim- ming is not water, yet he is in water, bearing water in and out) makes the Prapanca-World Maya, which Brahman alone could explain from Brah- man's point of view. Maya-ta nearest emotive synonym we have chosen to be Involvement. That which is described as Māyā appears to be an illusory knowledge of things from an empirical point of view. This state of immature knowledge is philosophically called ignorance, anti-knowledge (Avidya or Ajñāna). Like the embryonic fluid, this Avidya covers the germ of life in the foetus,53 Life is disturbed by confused thinking caused by Avidya. Looking from Brahman's point of view it is Mäyä but looking from Self's point of view, it is Avidya. Brahman's immensity being known to Brahman alone anything less than Immense, would clearly appear to be a plaything engaged in temporary games which begin to end, and end to begin. But each unit of self looks out of the self and sees many selves, mani-ness. Self's surroundings are covered with selves. Each is a unit. For a while the Self cannot imagine Immensity. This is Self's

imperfection. This is Self's lack of knowledge, Avidya. Thus knowledge itself is divided in Vidya and Avidya, spiritual and empiricalknowledge. All knowledge is not perfect knowledge. "It is not a distinction between higher and lower knowledge. But it cuts through religious doctrines."54 Truth in its higher form has no attribute. Sat-Cit- Ananda is the Being or the Brahman. The secondary state of the same Truth (Truth with Mala as the Siddhantin would say), or Brahman, appears as 1svara. He is the Lord, with attributes.

What is said to be Brahman in the Vedantin's language is Śiva in the Siddhantin's. Śiva is also known as Išvara, with Isvart as an alter-ego; this is the same as Śiva and Sakti of Tantra.

Linga

The abstract form of the Siva-concept is crystallised in the Linga, which, as a word, we have noted, means subtle, symbol or index. We have also seen a little while ago how both Samkhya and Yoga-Vasistha use the word in the sense of 'subtle'. The subtle concept of Siva could be imaged through symbolism alone. The Nada-Bindu and the Sphota theo- ries, as well as the Spanda theory imply a subtle projection of the idea in a concrete form. This symbolic abstract form of a subtle idea is the Linga index with a Nada-field, and a Bindu central-piece. The material used for making a Linga might be stone, crystal, metal, even clay. A pebble could be accepted as Linga. Its shape, often confused with the Phallic, is not particularly phallic, and is in no way reminding of any offensiveness. Yoga Vasistha explicitly states that the Linga-Atman is a "mental-contemplation; as the contemplation of an ideal totality is much too hazardous for the Jiva (personal being), the Linga-Atman in the Linga-form is of some assistance."55 In spite of these, positive authorities, prejudice and bias impose erotic meanings to Linga. Most of such confusion was created by ill-advised interested propaganda, some by poli- tical zeal, and not a little by self-projection of the depraved. Of course, in some cases, as we have noted, due to historical and cultural coincidence it may not be difficult to find the Phallic and the Saivic together.

"Weaker minds could easily fix their attention in meditation when using a Linga-form.... Real worship, however, could never be offered to image-forms." And in course of time, these Linga-forms were developed and elaborated into anthropomorphic forms for assisting still more weak minds. If we study the methodised ornamentations (Abharanas), the weapons and decors (Ayudha) of these elaborate forms, we read clearly in them, the objective representations of the very subjective principles found
discussed in Śiva or Sakti Agamas.

As the mind cognises an alter-ego, so the Image-forms had also to be elaborated into their alter-egos. These developed as the consorts of the God-beings, Devas had their Devis; Siva too had Sakti as a counterpart,a complementary. So the 'rides' or the Vahanas, or the symbol-birds and animals are subject to interpretation. Most of these synthesise the pagan with the metaphysical.

The Hindu images (Múrti) are thus the tangible featurisation of the ideals attributed to the Brahman's emergence into many through its creative state (livara-la). For a full appreciation of these 'grotesque' representations it is essential that the student makes
a
thorough study of Samkhya and Vedanta; and in the case of the Siva images, of the

Siddhantas.
Hindu myths, unlike the Greek myths, contain more than mysticism. The Matrix of the origin of Hindu gods is invariably traced to some basic subjective idea derived through a seer's interpretation of some spiritual aspect. These convey in form what is incommunicable in spirit. More- over the forms themselves are spiritual aids, although to the devotees their divinity is Real.57

Since all energies at the origin of the forms of manifestation are but aspects of the divine power, there can exist no object, no form of existence, which is not divine in its nature. 58

According to the latest evaluation of this Hindu attitude to poly- theism, (in spite of the rigid monism supported by Hindu thought), Hinduism's survival, compared to other religions, is both assured and understandable.

All religions are based on the recognition of a super-sensorial reality. Very rarely can we find in any religion a positive assertion which is not to some extent justifiable. Error and conflict arise from exclusion from negative elements.... A religion reduced to a faith centred around fixed dogmas, and refusing to equate its data with those of other creeds, is to religion what the art of the medicine- man is to medical science, the mere practical utilisation of some elements of knowledge accidentally assembled and used more for social supremacy than for real cure. This remains very short of the total search for the whole truth.... This dilemma does not arise for the Hindu, for Hinduism does not claim any of its discoveries to be more than an approach. It rejects all dogma, all belief that reason and experience cannot justify; it remains ever-ready to accept new and better expressions of the universal laws as they can be grasped through individual experience.... The principle of a multiple approach, the recognition of the fundamental right of the individual to follow his own gods, his own code of behaviour and ritual practice, has spared India so far the standardisation of beliefs, which is by its nature the greatest obstacle on the path of Divine discovery,50

Thus on the path of Divine discovery the crowd of Hindu gods become fellow-passengers who add delight, confidence and directives for venturing into the unknown. Each god becomes a self-expression, a wish fulfilled, a poem completed. This is Isvara-ta or Bhagavat-tà, the manifestations of the Om Supreme, Brahman in form. In the sense that the idea of the poet assumes the shape of a poem without ever capturing
in full the poetry he wanted to express, Brahman becomes Isvara, and Isvara becomes Bhagandns. The empirical validity of knowledge about Brahman remains intact in spite of the acceptance of Isvara. Higher and lower knowledge are distinct.

Brahman, accessible through higher knowledge, is the fruit of pure (Nirmala) knowledge; Isvara-knowledge has impurities of Ajnana and Avidya that engenders the emotive diversions which accept Mäyä itself as Real. Similar distinctions are found between the Theravada and Zen systems of Buddhism. "All beings have the Buddha nature," claims the Soto Zen master Dogen; he explains this to be the same as "All beings are the Buddha nature" meaning, "the Buddha-Nature is everything." Replacing Buddha nature by Brahman the claims of spiritual aphorisms like Tat-Tuam-Asi (Thou art That) and Sarvam khalu idam Brahma (All this is but Brahman) are easily discernible in Zen Buddhism. To the Vedäntist of both Advaita-monist and Visistädvaita (Qualified Monism) schools, the above, like Hinduism, does not reflect pantheism or pantheistic mysticism at all. Zen ends with a Void (Sanya), and talks of Nirvana. The Vedantin is positive and speaks of Brahman, and he talks of Liberation or Mukti. He disagrees with Eckhardt's statement: "The godhead is as void as if it were not." Rudolf Otto's great work 'Mysticism East and West' refers to Eckhardt's mystical experience. He brings in there the element of grace, an element which, Rämänuja, along the tradition of the Nigama Saints, reserves as the special attribute of the Godhead showed as benediction on the deserved devotee.

Grace and Realisation

Grace, as we had time and again pointed out, forms its own mysterious zone within which it acts in love, in charity, in forgiveness, in benediction; and the very sudden unexpectedness of its appearance overwhelms. Like Siva receiving the tidal Grace of Sakti, like receiving the celestial stream of Ganga on his matted looks, Grace descends in tidal torrents on highly deserving Yogins who are fit to absorb the rich benediction, and pass on the same to the world of the common. Śiva in the anthropomorphicimage transfigures a great Yogi who 'drinks the nectar of the thousand- petalled lotus'. Kapila, Vyasa, Nárada, the Four', ie., Sanat, Sanandana, Sanatana and Sanatkumāra, Raghupati Rama, Vasudeva Krsna, Jesus, Muhammed, Buddha, Samkara, Caitanya, Tagore, St. Theresa, Aurobindo, Ramakrishna and a host of others received this Grace,

and passed on the tradition. Grace incarnates in the human machine the divine awareness which sparks off a new generation of consciousness. It unites the individual with the cosmic.

From this first and fundamental contact between the god and the human race-which means in virtue of the penetration of the Divine into our nature-a new life was born: an unlooked for magnification and 'obediental' extension of our natural capabilities, - grace.... Grace is the unique sap that starts from the same trunk and rises up into the branches. It is the blood that courses through the veins under the impulse of one

and
the same Heart, the nervous current that is transmitted through the limbs at the dictate
of one and the same Head; and the radiant Head, that mighty Heart that fruitful stock must inevitably be Christ,61

"The Anointed One', i.e., the Parnabhişikta-yogi (Parna-complete, full; and Abhişikta=Anointed). There have been many such incarnated cosmic beings in the mystic world of the yogi, for whom Śiva represents the Ideal form of Yogi.

"God is bound to act," says Eckhardt, "to pour himself into thee as soon as He shall find thee ready."": He found Caitanya, Tagore and Aurobindo ready, and poured. In all mystical utterances there is an inescapable element of unanimity regarding grace, love and union. "There is really a union.... It is plain enough what union is; in union two separate things become one."'63

In this realisation through Grace, in this union through Bhakti, the absolute monism advocated by Vedanta, and the relative dualism, or qualified monism advocated by Ramanuja converge, and make the fasci- nating Hindu system of Saivism and Saiva-Siddhanta not merely a theo- logical form, or a religious belief, but a metaphysically illuminated method of thinking, as well as a mystical experience of the divinest spiritual significance. In Saivism traditional Hindu India receives a finality that attributes a new meaning to the name 'God of gods' (Devadeva), or 'Great God' (Mahadeva).

The Saiva Siddhanta offers a special place to Grace (Karuṇā) in developing its approach to the ultimate transcendental realisation. To the Siddhantins Siva is God in the absolute sense in spite of his forms, icons, weapons, decorations, rides and the family-members. If God is pure, omnipotent, omniscient, gracious, eternally free from bonds-sois Siva. Šiva has the five functions of creation (Srafi), preservation (Sthiti),

destruction (Pralaya), concealment (Tirodhana) and Grace (Karuna). In Grace Śiva fulfills himself. "He is the king of the world, the Lord of tears, the great seer from whom the gods are born, and into whom they emerge in the end." "From his breath

sprang the eternal word (Aum) and from the word, the Universe."65 "He is the Ruler (Isana) master of all forms of knowledge. He is the Law of all elements,"

Cosmologically speaking Maheśvara is another name of the Aksara-Purusa, the Being of beings. He is the deity of transcendental knowledge. The three aspects of cosmic sacrifice mentioned in the Vedas. Might (Indra); Devourer (Agni); and the Devoured (Soma) unite in him.

The Five Powers of Śiva

Souls in essence are pure; same as God; but the Anava-Mala hide their potencies. God functions in removing this confusion. Hence his name: Hara, the Remover. For this Tapas, or austerity, is called for. The human body becomes instrumental for Tapas. To Tapasya, or austere practices, the world around, as Aśuddha Māyā, becomes so very purposive. This world, under the influence of Tapas induces Karma, and removes the Anava. Easily explained; but the process is not, actually, as easy. The progress differs in individuals, and is often befouled by retardation, sloth, temptation, vanity or even excess of austerity. The hazardous and confusing process of transmigration becomes a challenging faith; as between evolution and evolution, souls could succumb to inertia, and take it to be 'peaceful quiescence', and then rot till doomsday. This is exactly what happens to those bravadoes who under the spell of drugs claim transcendental peace. The situation, then, is handled by the powers of Asuddha Māyā. A flood of energy springs out and creates hallucinations. Śiva, even as Death and Destruction, opens

doors to souls, which continue to evolve and advance. Death itself becomes benediction under the circumstances. Souls graced by Siva can fight through the inert dullness of Anava. Souls are made to act, and participate in worldliness. They are made to accept pleasure as happiness, the limited as unlimited, and the ephemeral as eternal. Even in this concealment of spiritual realisation (Vidya) and informative knowledge (Jana) the concealing power (Tirodhana) of God displays in graceful companionship of souls. The original impurity (Mala) is stirred, made active, before being filtered, neutralised and removed. Concealment is the fourth power of Siva.

Siddhanta's final aim is Salvation (Mukti). Experience alone educates souls about where good lies. A soul acquires indifference as a positive quality. This type of indifference releases a soul from Karma,and makes it acquire the supreme quality of Sannyasa (abnegation) through experience. This type of indifference and detachment does not reflect passivity. Submission to a nobler power is a chastening act. In order to be able to grasp a knowledge in its objectivity, so that the fundamental subjectivity about the source of power is fully mastered, an objective detachment has to be cultivated. For the practising Yogi "renunciation of action is not approved. It is an expression of inertia indulged through a confused state of the mind." So understood and practised, to renounce becomes a kind of fulfilment and enjoyment. The soul takes no account of a confusing attachment (Asuddha Maya), and claims real intelligence as a matter of right.

Three Stages of Descension of Grace

Next comes the stage when the divine Grace is ready to descend. It descends, but it is accepted according to the varying capacity of the soul. The Lord then reveals himself, and acts as the instructor to the soul. The soul receives the Vijnana-Kald as its inner light; against this light he is able to distinguish the Pralaya Kala, not as light, but as a divinity in a supernatural form. Only the Sakala form appears as identical with the soul, but acts as a preceptor alone. St. Theresa speaks of all these three stages as she narrates her experiences of the stages of prayer reaching the union. She had her guide,

her preceptor. This Yogini's experiences conform fully to the advice contained in the Siddhanta. Such instruction from the preceptor is called the initiation into the purifying state of the spirit, or Dikd. The formal rite of baptism appears to be elementary when

compared to Dikṣā.
Initiation: Dikṣā: Guru

Diksă removes the spiritual Impurities (Mala). Knowledge is an entity; so is lack of knowledge, or ignorance. The impurities of the soul (Mala), another entity, inherent in all things born, are removed by Knowledge: yet another entity. Freed of Mala the soul recovers itself from its material state, and rejects its sense of atomic finiteness. In this state of atomic finiteness Saivism is monistic. But it does not turn its Face from the manifest existence of duality or plurality. It asserts that due to untrained and indisciplined perception, an uninitiated view of the world (subject to the calls of the flesh and indisciplined sense-faculties) inevitably falls under the delusion of accepting this world of many as the one to be realised. Yet it is strange that at times one becomes happy to accept the Spirit to be One. This seemingly funny situation arises due to the mental inertia that naturally accepts thingsas they are; minds untrained declines any effort to probe, although it appears to concede that the Real cannot be transitory.

The subject is in search of an object. Away from itself, as long as it fails to perceive that the dual concepts of a subject and an object are based on a substantial error, form-concepts impose their rigidity on the perception of the Spirit. All forms are contained, all are restrictive. Spirit alone is free. This spirit cannot be many, although forms may delude to make one feel so. Here mind acts as an enemy of clear thinking; and feeling operates as a defective instrument, which misguides like the winds, or the stray-currents on the open sea. Mind is known for delusion. Discipline of the mind becomes therefore, essential for concentration (Dhyana). Mind, once disciplined, is able to cut through errors arising out of emotional imbalances. Thus the system of Yoga becomes an indispensable part of discipline and mind-control.

Names of Śiva

Śiva means the Ultimate Reality, the One, the Cause-Effect-sustaining principle, of which the creation with its manifoldness is just a manifested form (according to a Saiva). Form or the forms, however, are contained in Him, and is neither addition to Him, nor separation from Him. His Grace overwhelms all that is manifest or unmanifest; and it has a 'name'. As 'He', it is Śiva; as 'It', it is the pure Consciousness, the Supreme Consciousness, the Supreme Reality.

Let us examine some of the more important names by which the Śiva- Idea is contained and expressed. "Siva' or 'Sambhú', the Supreme God (Mahadeva), is the Supreme Reality, the Atman, the Self, of all beings; Śiva is Immutable and ever-perfect. He is pure Consciousness (Caitanya); Absolute Experience (Para Samvit); and the Supreme Lord (Parameśvara). Conceptually, Siva is Time, 'Kala', Eternity (Mahākāla), that which was before Being, and would stay on after Beings disintegrate and dissolve into no-Being. He is the Form-Basis of existence (Sthanu), Immobile (Jada), Beginningless (Anädi, Adinatha) and Subs trata of Beings (Bhâtela). He resides in all beings (Sarvatra-gama); i.c. transcends Time and Space (Digambara), and all that mind becomes aware of (Sarva). He is both Immanent and Transcendent.

The ideas contained in the names should be familiar by now. These conform to the Vedic or the Upanisad concepts of Reality. Otherwise, Reality cannot be given a name, neither could the God-experience be described. Expression of Experience of any kind suffers from inadequacy of identity.

Social Resistance to the Universal Concept of Siva

Yet this inexplicable Experience, too joyous to be kept contained, is communicated by the seers. The aid of language, limited as it is, is sought. Thus reference is made to two forms of the same Brahman. One of them is then the Supreme Reality beyond description, and is named Nirupadhika or Nirguna; (without epithets and unqualified)

and the other is qualitative and cognisable (Saguna). Together with the person seeing' or 'realising' the qualitative and the unqualitative, the Saguna and Nirguna form a trio. In a sense it could be called a Trinity. Of these three the cosmos of Experience is made. Similar trinities are referred to in many other systems. In Samkhya it is Puruşa and Prakṛti; in Christianity it is the concept of Father, Son and Holy Ghost; in Hindu theology as Brahma, Visnu and Siva; in Sufism, Aashiq, Mashooq and Ishq; in Vedanta, Sat-Cit-Anandam; in Upanisad, A-u-m. All these ultimately lead to the same fundamental idea: the Absolute Reality is unqualitative and perfect. It is the tranquil-state known as Śiva. Yet, the qualities such as catalepsy and dynamism, stuffiness and will, are in- herent in the One; and the two aspects, stillness and agitativeness are really like the two wings of one bird, the two lobes of one lungs, the two sides of one thing. But it denotes a centre, which as a point 'Is', and has no dimensions or limitations. Of course, this 'is' has not the same meaning as the 'is' in the sentence "This is', or 'A table is'. On the circum- ference any point is both a beginning and an end; the selected one to be used depending on the direction of the projected movement. Similarly the twoness of the one is merely a directional difference that does not deny the Oneness of the Subject. These two, and the One, together, account for a metaphysical unit of the three (Trinity), out of which the theological Trinity originates. The simplicity of theology accommodates the simple minds according to their convenience. The necessity of making room for the qualified, or unqualified God-concept has been enjoined in the Yoga-Sutra of Patanjali (Dhyanābhimata).

The concept of Siva, rightly understood, makes the acceptance of a universal God easier. A form of Brahmanism which was built up on a privileged class superiority, aristocratic hierarchy, and vested interests was severely opposed to this universality in Saivism. The flood of alien forms, already referred to, was being antagonistically resisted. The story of this resistance fills the pages of the Purānas as a mortal struggle between Śiva and Daksa, Asuras and Suras. The Siva temples and Siva-offerings were taboos to Brahmins for a long time. Many of the orthodox still do not accept Siva-

Prasada, the food offered to Śiva. Follow- ers of Śiva were known as 'Ganas', the most dreaded enemies to the sacrifices which the ancient Aryans used to perform.

The Two Trends: Saguna and Nirguna

Šiva continued for a long time to be a god of the proletariat. This position was later found to be militating against the interest of so-called good-living. The position called for a reassessment of theological values. And this was done through the hard work of the Saiva metaphy- sicians. The days of conflict between the Vedic and the Agamic were over.

Some traces of it remain still. The discerning could yet find that in Hinduism there flows side by side two streams of Saivism. One of them is the spiritual Saivism which forms a part of theological culture, inclusive of Tantra. In this form Śiva in the Linga-form is worshipped with Sakti; or he is worshipped in any anthropological form as a family- man. But there are also many forms of cults practised under the large umbrella of Saivism. These cannot be strictly said to conform to an ascetic, restrained and philosophical form of worship. Yet these are Śaivas. Their tradition and continuity confirm the presence of non-Aryan and alien cults in Hindu Śaivism. There is also a type of devotees who follow Śiva as a lover of family, dances and music. The cultish followers still follow a phallic sex-trend, although under a camouflaged form, because they want to avoid the majority view of the orthodox Saiva Siddhanta. The last category of clandestine cult-forms indulge in excesses of rigours, wine, flesh and sex. They are tolerated in the body of Hinduism; but are kept away from the strict Śiva Forms.

The two streams of Austerity and Gaiety find their respective authority from Nirguna and Saguna concept. But the extreme forms, above referred to, such as Pasupatas, Pisacas, Aghoras, Maheśvaras, Kāpālins, etc., excuse themselves as Saguna worshippers (worshippers of a qualified Śiva), but really continue the cults, and

practise their mystic rites well under cover. The class-Hindus never consider them as part of the orthodox.

The entire question of Saguna and Nirguna forms of worship, thus, finally rests on the fact of Experience: experience of the abstract; and experience through form; the subjective Thrill, or the objective satisfaction. Pablo Picasso in explaining his art spoke of this. To understand was less important to him than to feel. Like listening to the songs of a bird the abstract is to be participated in, without being bothered about understanding.

Introducing Pratyabhijña

This mystery of enjoying through actual confrontation, actual realisa- tion is the mystery of Pratyabhijñā as exposed in the Kashmir system.

Naturally it had to be searching and analysing, probing and scrutinising. It had to be subtle, sensitive and personal. It demanded the most impersonal in man's intellect to appreciate its stand; but the act, as well as the fact of appreciation have to be intimately personal.

Pratyabhijña and Genesis

Pratyabhijñā explains, through an analogy, how creation evolved out of Siva. "As in the orb of a mirror pictures such as those of a town or village shine, which are inseparable from it, and yet are distinct from one another and from it, so from the perfectly pure vision of the supreme Bhairava (The training that makes the Soul fearless through the discipline of the Terrible) this Universe, though void of distinction, appears distinct from that vision." (Those who are interested to compare might read Tennyson's poem 'Lady of Shallot' in this light, and appreciate the sensitive poet's acquaintance with Eastern thoughts.) The same idea has been again explained through another analogy: "As syrup, molasses, jaggery, sugar-balls, candy, etc., are all alike juice of the sugarcane, so the diverse conditions are all of Sambhů, the Supreme

Self." Their distinct- ness becomes a matter of personal taste and preference. The wind, otherwise one in a flute, takes six distinct notes through six holes. So the one appears as many; but each of those many is distinct to the individual who feels it. None can accept many at the same time, yet be distinct. We shall have to deal with the

phenomenon of Pratyabhijnä along with Abhāsavāda in greater detail when discussing Kashmir Śaivism.

Vedanta and Creation

This leads us to an explanation of Creation. The One is one; not many. The maniness of the one is many when awareness becomes limited to forms alone, but remains unaware of the Spirit. This explanation, viz., to regard creation as something evolved out of One, and as such as something real, although not final or whole, clearly contradicts the familiar explanation the Advaita (Monism) of Vedanta, which considers all empirical experience as being the effect of an involved misconception. An acute thirst creates consoling images in a mirage; a previous experience creates the illusion of a snake for a piece of rope; drops of dew reflect the whole sky; so, desire, which acquires more and more demand, life by life, makes the flesh draw towards the unreal as a reality. It was, as it were, a yawn between a sleep and a sleep of the Eternal Reality. Brahman alone is the Real; all else is just a baby's pastime of playing with his own hand, going round and round, up and down, whilst lying in his little cradle. Despite the smallness of his crib, the little monarch yet enjoys very muchthe situation he creates, now laughing, now babbling, now crying, holding on to all his experiences as real and substantial. Complete involvement sends him along these unfounded spirals of joys and sorrows. When we become ignorantly involved in self-seeking exercises we act only as infantile busy-bodies. The Brahman, thus, plays at itself; and all expres- sions that emanate are as real in respect of the Brahman as the play- moments and their resultant reactions are on the child. The player, the play, the play-objects, the play-images, and reactions all proceed from the One. The evolute and involute, emanate

from and disappear into One. The rest that comes out of the One is but causal, transitory and illusory.

Abhasaväda (Real-Unrealism)

Indeed the theory of Pratyabhijnä school of Saivism is not as subjective and unsubstantial as one might infer from the foregone paragraphs. In order to explain Pratyabhijñā Abhinavagupta enunciates a theory, known as Abhāsavāda. It claims that as it proceeds from the Real, the Universe, however, tiny, transitory, ephemeral, is certainly not quite unreal. The apparent illusoriness is ingrained with a universal realism. What is 'unreal', cannot proceed from the Real. There is nothing like pure unreal. The real may be hidden like a needle in a haystack, but it is there. One may take years, and live from life to life, before one finds out the needle by carefully and patiently removing all the straw one by one; or one could get at it much more easily through the magnetic assistance provided by a Guru. But never should a Saiva say that there is Unreal anywhere in a perfect state, for then that state would be the One where the Omnipresent is not. This would become self-contra- dictory. The Saiva, thus, like the Samkhya-yogî, is a Realist, whereas the Vedantin is an idealist for whom the only real is the Ideal. A scholar of comparative religion and philosophy would find traces of neo-Platonic Idealism in the theory of Abhāsavāda. We will have the opportunity to compare the thoughts of Plotinus, Philo, Dante and Shelley with those expounded in Pratyabhijñā.

The Buddha is said to have convinced a bereaved mother about the realism of death and suffering by asking her for a handful of mustard seeds from a home where none had died in the family. Buddhism sees Death as a Reality. It is a philosophy of suffering, breathing, despair. The Stoics and the early Christians came under its spell. After Roman excesses this kind of sentimental despair and ascetic self-chastisement was an expected reaction. A sense of guilt could damage the life of an individual, a nation, a culture. It is necessary to remain upright. Śaivism sees life and awareness as

Reality. For the former Samsarawas moth-eaten; for the latter, it was a temporary child-play. Hindu positivism could best be understood by following this contrast. The Neo-Platonist, or the Athanasian creeds came much nearer to Saivism, Grace and

Śakti-Nipäta. Of that later on.

Siva-Sakti

What then aids the still, quiet, unagitated Śiva to be manifested? The Pratyabhijnä-school answers the question by saying that Siva is Siva; and is not to be taken as Śava, i.e., a dead-body (Dead-Matter). Siva is quiet; tranquil; like the eye-balls in a state of sleep; but not without animation. Śiva is the tranquil state of power. Power and Śiva are one. There is Śiva in Sakti and Sakti in Śiva. They are, as we know, the two- in-one, as the moonlight in the moon. "All physical beings are organised in Power known as Kulakundalini. The Union of this Power with Śiva is known as conjugality [Con+Jugum (Yoke) L. or Tuga (s); Yugala(s) = a pair).

Power is not different from the possessor thereof. The energy inherent in Being is Becoming. Being is Siva; Becoming is Sakti. Thus Power is Reality itself, as Becoming. In Life and its manifestations, in mind and its expressions, in matter and its formations, in the law of continuity and eternity, the Power, in conscious, unconscious, subconscious of supra- conscious states, is Becoming. This power which results from urge, pro- jects manifestations. It is the neutral Immensity projecting itself into the three basic-tendencies (Gunas). Inherent in the hundred legends in the myths of all times and all lands this inseparability of the electronic bond between the two forces of positive and negative, as male and female counterparts, has crystallised into great love-stories.

Power is conventionally accepted as Female and Negative, and Being as Male and Positive. Becoming is Šakti; Being is Siva. Becoming is Rädhä; Being is Krsna. Becoming is Mary, the eternal Virgin; and Being is the Christ, the eternal Son. Becoming is Isis, and Being is Osiris. Becoming is Istar, Being is Marduk. So on, the

metaphysical correlates continue in the legendary figures of Tammuz and Astarte, Ado- nis and Venus, Persephone and Demeter, Sîtā and Rāma, Savitri and Satyavan.
How close these legends kept to their original structures might be compared through tracing only one of the series.

Let us compare the legends of Purúravas and Urvasi (Veda); Savitri and Satyavan (Purana), Venus and Adonis (Greek Myths). Demeter and Persephone (Cretan Myths), Tammuz and Astarte (Sumerian Myths). All these legends grew up in different countries, different cultures at different times. Yet a strange similarity runs through all of them. The basic symbolism of the legends grow fainter before the intense dramaof the emotional content of the stories. Gods and goddesses emerged out of human sentiments and emotions contained in these legends, which really held a basic truth.

Power and its Forms

As such, this Becoming-Power (Sakti) acquires modes, basic tendencies in relation to its functional demands and properties. The power of self- luminosity (Cit), the power of transcendent consciousness, shines by itself, irrespective of recognition or visualisation. Human recognition the bonds of Pasa and the state of Pasu (animal) are sublimated. The Soul comes into its own, and realises its full significance; it attains Šivata, i.e. turns its faculty of cognisance to seeing all as the One, and the One as all; Śiva in all, and all in Siva. St. Theresa writes a whole chapter on Rapture through union to establish this Šivatd. The cogniser and cognised having become one, becomes a Mukta-Jiva, or equivalent to the state of Śiva Himself. This is liberation, release, salvation or Mukti. Despite the fact that the material body continues its individual existence, the material laws of existence do not affect the spiritually liberated absolute knowledge, which continues in complete unison with Siva.

Peace and Eastern Religions

This feeling of Oneness has been the characteristic of the Eastern religions. The great spiritual master-minds of the East, the Vedic sages, the Buddha, the Christ and Hazrat

Muhammad, to mention just a few, set the supreme quest of the human mind towards an ever-expanding introspective orbit which gradually bears away the ego-conscious self out of its atomic-limits, until it reaches the expanses of the freedom of cosmic apprehension. Unfortunately this has not appealed to the West.

The West has been naturally involved in materialistic success down the ages. Except for the brief, but brilliant, times of the Christian mystics, the West has always sought the suffocation of accumulated pelfs. Organisation and social order impressed the West as a creed; the life- rhythm in the West found the worship and adoration of organisational discipline and domination by power to be more a purposive, if not nobler or higher way of living, than adopting the righteous path of self-discipline and sublime peace with its prize of inner contentment. Nothing is more illustrative of this fact than the present state of the Christian society as a whole. The filling nobility of the spirit that Jesus breathed, is found missing in the hollow organisation known as the Church. Order, hierarchy and bureaucracy have usurped the place of God, humility and Love. A dogmatic insistence on organisational allegiance, and pro-fessional loyalty betrays, more than anything else, the militant spirit of the Roman Caesar. The freedom and expansiveness, the proletariat concern and the benign humanity that moved the Son of Mary to bring a new message of mass-love in a society of the most gruesome class-oligarchy, nas gradually been superseded by a cynically snobbish class-consciousness. The Spirit of Man had chosen an abandoned stable for its incarnation; but this has been gradually stifled by the palatial masonries of pride and pomp. The Pope wears the mark of the Cross on his shoes!

The agencies of Greek dialectics and Roman Law threw out gradually the Jew concern for spiritual individualism and the economic equality of socialism. Paul, the Greek, superseded Jesus, the Jew; Paul the organiser, superseded Jesus, the Spirit; Paul the order, superseded Jesus, the revolu- tion. The pious and moral value of godliness was shattered into many sensual fragments for the chosen to indulge in. The courts and the court-ministers of the Roman church offered its powers as abetment for a strangling imperialism which to-date characterises religious exercises generally, and the Christian

church in particular. Speculation more than introspection, casuistry more than active participation, dogma more than faith, law more than ethics, words more than spirit, tyranny more than love, brought out in the open the characteristics of an organisation. The Order of Jesus Christ had hardly succeeded to transport itself across the waters of the Galilee. The dusts of Jerusalem have been drenched with the blood of the aggressors; but the true discovery of Jerusalem has not yet begun.

Jesus insisted that man could meet his Father. Buddha insisted that the individual sense of fractional existence could be identified with a totality. The Upanisads insisted that all is from Brahman, and to Brah- man all is directed. The Gîta says that the Yogi's being is cosmic as he sees one in all and all in one. The message of the Eastern spirit of religiosity is not merely moral; it transcends morality, and becomes a basis for universal peace. The spirit of Hinduism demands this equality. It acts against personal self. A personal peace is no peace. Political peace is a chimera. Social peace is the peace of a dead womb. The right type of peace has to be impersonal and impersonal alone. It is the peace that turns the mother's vitals into milk. It is the peace that boils my broth in the kitchen where my mother stirs the ladle in the pot, and croons a melody. It is the peace that the farmer builds up while digging up the quiet earth for the crop of the next autumn.

This perception of quiet-in-agitation is Šivata or Tanmayata. In our discussion on Samipya, Sarapya, Salokya and Sayujya we have already analysed this. It is the hidden sense of a paradox; the naval string that binds the contraries; the union of opposites; the dynamism between the poles. The sacred stream of spiritualism overflows the banks of religion,and spiritualist-mystics form a universal brotherhood. The Bhakti theory of union leading to the Realisation of the Absolute was not some- thing unknown to the non-Hindu spiritualists. We have evidence from experienced authorities about this monistic dualism and dualistic-monism. Here are some:

(a) "Who knows whom, when all becomes the same I?", asks the Eastern sage in his joy for having reached this peace. Similar utterances follow one after the other.

(b) The reborn soul is the eye which, having gazed into the sun, thence-forward sees the sun in everything. -Eckhardt.

(c) He reaches transcendence who does not hurt others, since all are but the same 'I' which exists in all as the same Lord (who acts through all). -Gitä.

(d) And my own being is found in union with others.... The Inner Light is beyond praise or blame; like space, it knows no boundaries. -Young-chia Ta-shih

(e) Behold but One in all things; it is the second that leads you astray. -Kabir.

(f) I knocked from outside the closed door,

And begged for entry.

Who are you? came the question.

"It is I"-I said, and knocked again.

The door remained closed.

"Who are you," the question was flung again at me.

"It is You," said I.

The door opened!

-Jalal-ud-din Rumi.

Union and Doubt

The essential difference between the two schools of Śaivism, the Kashmir Trika and the Southern Pratyabhijñā, is that Kashmir Śaivism idealistically speaks of Oneness as the highest goal of Śivată. The Southern Tamil school of the Siddhanta realistically keeps aware of the Loved and the Beloved. Advaita, for the Siddhantins, does not deny dualism; it confirms Two. It is not true to say, according to the Siddhantin, that 'there

are not two'; there are; but the two are not two 'ones'; they are the One, but only in two. There are two; but the two are one; yet one, up to a point.

The Beloved is all in all;

The lover really veils Him;

The Beloved is all that lives;

The lover is a dead thing.

-Jalal-ud-din Rumi.

Thus we note that both the schools believe in Advaita. One proposes for its goal an open march forward to attain and realise the thrill of Advaita (pure monism); the other chooses the humbler position, whereby Love and Service are sought for as privilege and Grace to be put to the use and service of the same One present in all. One is purely subjective, and leads to a reclused life away from massive involvement. The other is objectively dedicated to an arduous programme of perpetual service to even the meanest, commonest, filthiest being, taking them to be yet another abode of the same
One. This is the Cross that the dedicated must always be prepared to bear; this is the 'yoke' under which the dedicated toils. An enemy to this approach is an enemy of society, and the enemy of the One. To be able to assist in destroying the innate ignorance in Man becomes his mission, even if the mission calls for prices in blood. Śiva does not hesitate. In destroying the offending Devas like Dakṣa, or the Asura, like 'Tripura', he did not hesitate to wield his terrific trident and invincible Bow, Pinaka (see Plate 40).

The realist cannot conceive of a merging unity with Śiva. Souls released are yet souls. It is only in a released state that the souls could enjoy. If the enjoyer and the enjoyed become one, what was the point of enjoyment? The Visistädvaita (Qualified Monism) school of Vaisnavism too accepts a similar position of the servant and the served; but with them insistence on servility wafts them further and further away from the

subjective state to the objective. The excess of fervour in itself poses new obstructions. These emotionally activised and dedicated persons should bear in mind the true nature of emotion and Māyā. Even though tamed, a tiger is a tiger. It is good to bear that in mind. Too much fervour could lead to a state of qualified projections, which could create an altogether new world of Prapanca. As a result, the immaculate tran- quillity of Truth could be easily interfered with. The Siddhantin concen- trates on the unqualified soul, and soul alone. This Soul, plus the body- bonds (Pasa) constitute the Being; and the Lord of Being is Pati; what has to be sacrificed for release from bonds is the ignorance formed of impurities (Mala); and this is the 'animal' (Pasu). The Being which used to expe- rience through Paša, after illumination, experiences Pati; no longer 'through' the physical being (Pafs), as the Vilistädvaita (Qualified-monist) school would claim. In the illumined state the Pasa-Realisation becomes the Pati-realisation.

But to the idealist this still remains to be a stage where another stage is suggestively present, a stage higher and more subtle, viz., that of Pati.

The Pati in Tantra is Sakti or Power. She is Brahman (often sung in the hymns as Brahma-Maya). Cit is her manifestation, and Cit as consciousness manifests itself in many forms like perception, inference, analysis, judgement, etc.68 These facets of Consciousness are imaged as the instruments, wea- pons (Ayudhas) of the same Sakti, or Mother Goddess, who is found endowed with many hands, many faces, an many companions. Maya is just another assumed attribute of the same conscious Sakti, i.e., Cit. The ques- tion of emergence of Maya from Cit as shown before, raises to the sensitive seeker the special problem of Emergence of Conscious-Concepts in rela- tion to Time, known as Sphota. We have spoken of Sphota already.

Jiva or Soul is essential; yet less so than Siva, the Real. Hence Jiva is Real-Unreal (Sat-Asat). The crystal state that nears a red flower, looks red; yet it is not red. The wine glass filled with wine loses its pure trans- parency. It looks red, gold and white according to the contents it happens to hold. But it is not at all affected, even though it

looks to be so. Thus Jiva's impurities too, are but circumstantial, environmental, and ephemeral. These are not substantial or real. But this knowledge about the realities of the nature of Jiva has to be first acquired for countering ignorance. No quarters to the dark forces of ignorance; no pity. Acquire Power's Grace to be able to cut it to pieces. "Like a broad sword severing the buffalo, your power severs the dark ignorance in twain," says Tagore.69 "Knowledge burns out (impurities) like fire....70 Death to the doubter...." With the sword of knowledge sever this doubt that is raised by sceptic doubts that lurk in the conscious self.72

Ways of Removing Doubts

Removal of this scepticism born of ignorance has to be processed through discipline and practical attention (Carya), action and rites (Krid), and lastly through devoted application of a determined and disciplined will (Yoga). Of course, over and above these three, the all-important factor of Grace will always remain supreme. Obeisance (pranipata), correct question (pari-prasna) and devotional attendance to serve (seva) are instru- ments of Knowledge.73 All rites to be rites must be based on Knowledge. The Tapas of Jnana purifies a false sense of egocentric sensuousness, and cleanses the soul of desire, passion, pleasure or sorrow. Actually this process of purification of the soul is but the starting point of a cycle of migration from a gross state of bounded imprisonment to a subtle state of complete freedom; and the time-span of just one physical existence may not prove to be enough for the process. A transmigration from one physical state to another physical state shall be called for. According to the French mystic Teilhard de Chardin, this is a cosmic incarnation of the Spirit into the Realised.74

The results of discipline, and of the rites and observances already acted upon, shall influence the transmigrated soul, which would seek its appropriate helpful environment for carrying out its process of freedom. Like the lion brought up with lambs, the manikin brought up with apes, or the princeling brought up with woodcutters, the transmigrated soul may remain for a while unaware of his intrinsic

birthright; but when made aware of the 'Kingdom' that is slipping out from his rightful claim, he would spring back into his own, and advance. Buddha, Confucius, Jesus, Samkara, Caitanya, Aurobindo, Ramana are glaring instances of such rude awakenings leading to the glory of the Kingdom."75

The agency which generally proves of help in the awakened second stage of awareness (which is really the first, for the subtle-self is known as the preceptor Guru). His main function is to assist in the process of In the illucidating the nature of ignorance from which the soul suffers. process he gives aid for the removal of ignorance. He guides.

Satkāryavada

Release is attainment of a non-discriminatory intelligence and arriving at the wisdom that views the One in all. "To see Me as the One abiding in all Being, whether in pain or in joy is the Yogi's supreme state."76 "It is unlikely for a person confirmed in Me, through knowledge as well as Realisation, and set at peace and love with the beings around to enter into the confused state of Samsara again.77

Of course, this is subtle; this is transcendental. It is far removed from the empirically informative knowledge; far removed from the knowledge that technocracy, commerce or defence needs. Such knowledge is depen- dent on pasa-jñāna. The knower is pasu (the confused being); and the knowledge itself by nature is unreal (Asat). Like writings on water, feelings in dream, or certainties acquired through mirage, wasteful in-formations gathered through book-knowledge alone are futile, chimeral, unavailing and wasteful. Such empirical knowledge about 'practical' life invites frustration, increases despondence, and degenerates the stamina of the Will-Power to take up a bold stand, and challenges, and perseveres against neurotic ills and nervous exhaustion. The so-called practical world is a world of panic and tension, speed and bluff. It leads to a 'cat-eating-cat' life.

But to the Siddhantins even the Asat is useful, inasmuch as it stores within it the potential Sat. In every 'cause' is hidden the 'effect' that is to emerge. All actions have

Sat's seed in them: and this is the Satkarya- vada of the Siddhantin. Asat too is existent, as cause for effect is; but Asat is not sat, as the effect is not the cause. The subtlety of the indeter- minable positive (Aniracaniya) postulated by the Vedantin is very close tothe subtlety of Satkaryanada of the Siddhantin. An Advaitin fully
practises on the basis of Satkāryavāda, and to that extent is a close relative of the Siddhantin.

In order to illustrate Satkāryavāda let me state a personal incident. A great Canadian Presbyterian Minister who used to visit my home once asked me in great love and affection, "Tell me, why are you not a Chris- tian?" He had passed his eightieth birthday a few days back. His eager solicitude moved me; and I asked, "Who is? Are you one?" He stopped to think; and stared at me with beady eyes. I was sincerely moved by his great regard and love for me. I reminded him, "You, of course, remember why St. Peter preferred to be crucified with his head downwards. Which of us is a Christian without the Christ's Grace. He is the Guru." "So it is; yet Baptism is necessary," the old reverend insisted. "Go ahead," said I. "You are not going to convert me with drops of water without His Grace. I do not mind the water. But I continue to pray for the Grace of the great Yogî that he had been, a Purṇa- bhişikta! What if the water is not there? What, if it is?" I was supremely relaxed. I could receive the water that consecrates.

"Without Baptism, we think... ," and here the loving old man stopped. Of course, he could not proceed.

I helped him with a smile, and continued, "... you think, without Baptism, I shall be in Hell. Is that it?"

His silence meant many contradictions fighting with many dogmas.

And I asked, "Reverend, please tell me if you believe that God is everywhere."

"Of course."

"Firmly?" "With as much faith and firmness as I am master of." "I agree with you. Is there any place where He is not, or cannot be, or is not allowed to be?"

He shuddered. His voice trembled with emotion. He said, "Who to sanction Him; Who to obstruct? He is all in all!"

"Tell me Reverend if He is in Hell; and in Satan too!"

The old man looked at me. His eyes were no longer beady. The drops of tears were quite frank and too full of love for his great faith in Christ.

I felt to console him, and told him, "This is the Hindu's obstinate faith. He being all in all, I cannot regard Hell as Hell, Satan as Satan. I only know that very few have earned the Grace to see him within; but some, like Satan suffer as the have-nots. The Christ alone holds the secret. Who are we? Let us love and admire, work and serve."

This view I owed to Satkāryavada's immensely hopeful postulation.

In release or Mukti knowledge is not enough; realisation is not enough; but the actual elimination of all Pasas and the spiritual sacrifice of all Pafu-ta has to be effected. Then Pati and Pati alone is realised. Not the body and its rude bonds; not the self encumbered with ego, passion and desire, but the transcendental. Real alone should constitute a totally (Bodhi or Jadna) consummate Realisation. Such a Realised-being is busy in his laziness; crowded in his loneliness; lonely amidst crowds; and active without movement. This is the state of sublime impersonal ecstasy (turiya).

God-Experience

In our wordly way of life we have been so enslaved to the empirical method of arriving at acceptable conclusions through a process of rationalisation and data, that our psyche has also been set to the same tune of observation, data, classification and conclusion.

This formula, so effective to the discoveries and inventions of materialistic knowledge, does not act beyond matter; hence it is of no use to the world of spirit. This standard method of processing, unfortunately, is not applicable to the experiences of divine knowledge.78 "Religious experiences possess their own distinctive character and we seem to be in touch with reality other than that of matter, life or mind. We cannot say we know matter, life or mind, and not God or ultimate spirit."79 We do not know what matter and life is. We know that although their real nature is hidden from us, we have to accept them as objects of experience. The same is true about religious experience. A knowledge of atom leads us to various kinds of use for the same knowledge. Those who accept God, and experience God, and go on contributing strength to the weak, solace to the demoralised, courage to the frustrated, peace and tranquillity to the worried and harassed. "Creation has been made possible through the continual self-surrender of the unit to the universe."80 They add substance to life's meaning, and provide answers to the riddles which like eddies come out of the mind, and lead the mind to chaos and doom. They experience, and interpret. "The idea of God is an interpretation of Experience."

This experience hums in the Upanisads. "It comes to those who are chosen by Him," says the Upanisad." And those chosen speak of the experience in many ways essentially conveying the same truth.

Many are the voices. Let us listen to some:

(a) The Known who knows does not define. He plays in Self; he unites in self and acts as he should.
-Mundaka, III: 1:4.

(b) I pray God the Omnipotent to place us in the ranks of his chosen, among the number of those whom He directsto the path of safety; in whom He inspires fervours lest they forget Him; whom He cleanses from all defilement, that nothing may remain

in them except Himself; yea, of those whom He indwells completely, that they may adore none besides Him. -

Al Ghazzali.

(c) He adored God and His mysteries as they are in themselves, and not as he understood them. -Amelote.

(d) As the Godhead is nameless, and all naming is alien to Him, so also the soul is nameless; for it is here the same as God. -Eckhardt.

(e) All that the imagination can imagine and the reason conceive, and understand, in this life, is not, and cannot be, a proximate means of union with God.

-St. John on the Cross.

(f) I will have nothing to do with a love which would be for God or in God. This is a love which pure love cannot abide; for pure Love in God Himself.

-St. Catherine of Genoa.

(g) Indeed, I tell you the truth, any object you have in your mind, however good, will be a barrier between you and the inmost Truth. -Eckhardt.

(h) The Astrolabe of the mysteries of God is love. -Jalal-ud-din-Rúmi.

(i) Love is infallible; it has no errors, for all errors are the want of love. -William Law.

(j) O friend, hope for Him whilst you live,

Know whilst you live,

understand whilst you live;

for in Life deliverance abides.

If your bonds be not broken whilst living,

what hope of deliverance in death?

It is but an empty dream that the soul shall

have union with Him

because it has passed from the body;

If He is found now, He is found then;

If not, we do but go to dwell in the city of death. -Kabir. (k) What is man? An angel, an animal, a void, a world, a nothing surrounded by God, indigent of God, capable of God, filled with God, if it so desires.-Berulle.

(1) Thou must love God as not-God, not-spirit, not-person not-image, but as He is, a cheer, pure absolute One, sundered from all two-ness, and in whom we must eternally sink from nothingness.-Eckhardt.

(m) Indian scriptures give cases of teachers who dispelled the doubts of their pupils by assuming an attitude of silence. --Aldous Huxley.

(n) Why do you ask? how I felt? Each word that describes, ever and ever renews it. -Vidyapati.

(0) Love of God is better than knowledge of God. -St. Thomas Aquinas.

(p) I come to ask thee to give me Thyself. -Ansari of Herat.

(q) The identity out of the One into the One and with the One is the source and fountainhead and breaking forth of glowing Love. -Eckhardt.

(r) What happened then? If I could tell that, I should tell a secret indeed.... I know I was not alone, that I never could be alone any more.... In some way that for which I had sought in vain for so many years, I belonged, and because I belonged, I was no longer I.... -Middleton Murray.

(s) Having realised the Super-Being the cords of heart give way; doubts come to an end; and actions stand still. -Mundaka, II: 2:8,

Thus the realiser does not describe. "The Tao which can be expressed is not the unchanging Tao; the name which can be named, is not an unchanging Name," says Lao Tze. They describe, like St. Theresa, in a language vibrant, distinct, passionate and real, yet mystically profound, and literally remote. They describe without prescription; and prescribe without any description at all. This mystery of Union is the sublimest of mysteries. 'Tato vāca nivartante', from where speech turns back baffled. Knowledge implies two, the Knower and the To-be-known; and so is imperfect. The perfect in order to be perfect must of necessity be One and be just an Experience. Both the systems, Kashmir's Trika, and Siddhantin's Pratyabhijñā agree here. The seeker for release alone need consorting with saints, and visiting temples. The released himself is the end of all rules and injunctions. That which sets all lights hollow, is indeed the sun, and no other light. That body which realises itself to be a temple needs visit no other temple.

Śivata and the Śiva Image

Those who are on the path of Śivata visualise Śiva as a subjective entity, and strive for that supreme knowledge which ends in Realisation and 'Liberation-in-life' (Jicanmukti). This highly mystic system expects the spiritualist's maximum energy to be set at a point as sharp and pointedas the tip of an arrow. At the top there is no place for two; no place for another point. All lines meet at that apex-point. Hence the conceptual form of Siva is pyramidical, vertical, though widely based The wide base is this material-world of plurality and abundance; but all progress from here aspire to reach a summit, form a vertex and meet a point. The crude many converge into the subtle One. This vertically lifting pyramid is representative of the Siva-aspiration. The Prakyti or Sakti manifestation stands as a complementary opposite. It is the Creative Urge. It spreads the One into many. The single vertex point, showing into the multi-

motived world of changes and counter-changes, through the evolution of Prakṛti and Maya, is represented as a triangle balancing on its vertex- point, as a whirlpool does, with the wider base up. The mystery of the double triangle is the graphic presentation of the Siva Mithuna, the pairing principles of peace and urge; absorption and creation; immutability and mutability; state and stir, or vertex and vortex.

The initiated reads the Rosetta-Stone; the astronomer, the stars; the mariner, the nautical compass; the physicist-technician, the computer; the statistician, the figures and line. The world of technique' is meant for the initiates. Techniques and aids are indispensable for the young novice; only charlatans and snobs, due to their cynically abusive tempera- ment, find them ridiculous and insane, suggestively naughty and sicken- ingly redundant. This is not so. They only project their ignorance, demonstrate their impatience and intolerance. Spiritual knowledge depends a great deal on a language that does not speak, yet expresses a host. This is symbolic; or a sign, or a Linga-language.

Hindu Saivism based on the highest spiritual truth is, thus, mistakenly confused with primitive phallicism and oriental eroticism because of a lamentable lack of information, and a more lamentable want of patience and sympathy.

Further study of the Siddhantin's stand, as different from the system of Kashmir Saivism and Vira Śaivism, should make this further clear. Besides the Siddhanta, these last two are the most celebrated of the Sina metaphysical studies. To Kashmir Saivism, Pratyabhijña, Spanda and Trika now.

B. The Kashmir System

I

Trika

In Kashmir, Śaivism expressed itself in three different ideological systems. These are known as Sphota, Spanda and Pratyabhijña. These are three distinct systems of Saivic metaphysics, and are in no way to be equated with the dogma of Trinity. Together, the three are famous as Trika. We had occasion to touch of these three technical aspects of the Siddhanta while studying the Southern Saiva Siddhänta. But actually these three, known together as Trika, have been thoroughly treated in Kash- mir Śaivism. Trika is a unique contribution to metaphysics and has to be studied with a little greater thoroughness. This we propose to do. Trika accepts three principles to constitute one whole. These three principles are: Siva-Sakti-Agu (comparable to Pati-Pata and Paju of the Siddhantins already described). But this is not the only explanation. There are several others offered as explanations of the word Trika.

Though the other schools of Saivism accept similar three principles, Kashmir Saivism reduced the three into one. The World, the Soul and the Siva are spiritually identical, it said. Two of the words used in this system, Spanda and Pratyabhijñā, are technical, and calls for explanation. Spanda: The Absolute, the One, that manifests itself into many. To realise the presence of the One Real in all the created world is to have a unique experience. Herein experience, not understanding, holds the key. To realise maniness dissolve away, and a supreme sense of Oneness prevail is indeed to experience a cosmic thrill. One change, one move- ment, one principle acting as forces of integration and disintegration, must be an electrifying realisation. An experience of this Oneness, despite the multiple forms and changes, is Spanda, Thrill. Pratyabhijñā: It really means 'recognition'; to recognise the idea in realisation. The way as to how this realisation could be achieved has been systematised in the philosophy of

Pratyabhijñā. For further elaboration of the experience of Spanda, and the recognition of Pratyabhijñā we have to wait.

History of Pratyabhijñā

Vasgupta

In the last years of the eighth century A.D. in Kashmir lived aninspired sage by name Vasugupta. The particular system he followed for his experience of transfiguration and beatitude was called by him as the Grace of Siva. Under the influence of transfiguration, by the Grace of Siva he recorded some aphorisms. He called it Śiva-Satra. Later, Vasugupta himself explained these aphorisms to a disciple named Khallata (Spanda-karika). He, in turn, explained the Siva-Sutra, in his book Spanda-Sarvasva. Somānanda, probably another pupil of the Vasugupta, wrote two more books on the same subject. These three together form the basis of Kashmir Saivism. But equally great writers, flourishing more or less about the same century, contributed to the realised aphorisms of Vasugupta, and elaborated on the mysticism involved. What resulted, developed into a system which came very close to Monism of Samkara.

The geographical position of Kashmir, and its politico-commercial situation during the first eight hundred years of the Christian era was such, as enforces a research in this area for a proper, in-depth appreciation of the sudden emergence of yet another subjective analysis of the metaphysical basis of Śaivism. We shall have time to investigate more fully later. Let this suffice to say now that the rise and spread of the Magi, Mithra and Zarathustra traditions in Iran as well as amongst the Selucids and Sassanians of the Persian Empire could not have left Kashmir, Gandhär and Bactria untouched.

Abhinavagupta

Of these later writers on Vasugupta's aphorisms Uppala, Ramākantha and Abhinavagupta (960 A.D.) are famous, particularly Abhinavagupta, who had been a

prolific writer. He, a grand pupil of Utpalācārya, was an encyclopaedic scholar, as well as a man of the highest spiritual attainment. He very often speaks of himself, and mentions the dates and places of composition of some of his works. If we are able to

write a fairly accurate history of Monistic Śaivism, it is primarily because of this distinctive feature of Abhinavagupta's works.84

Sources of Saivism: Agamas"

In all he has been known to have left forty-one books covering a vast range of subjects, such as aesthetics, poetics, music and metaphysics in its various aspects. His main contribution was monistic Śaivism. In establishing his theory, he refers to the sixty-four Saivagamas and quotes Agamic passages.

We have already spoken of the antique heritage of the Agamas. It is formally believed as a convention that Śiva himself explained theAgamas to his consort Sakti. The Agamas contains the "Vasudeva philosophy as explained by the Five faced One to the daughter of the Mountain." As such no Śaiva philosophy could be established without reference to the Agamas. Abhinavagupta wrote commentaries on the sixty-four Agamas; and also left a comprehensive book of exhaustive directives on the mystical, theological, ritualistic, epistomic, psychological and philosophical aspects of all the Agamas in a book called Tantraloka. In the Eastern intellectual treatises Tantraloka is a unique work, the like of which is not to be found in the philosophical heritage in any language.

Pratyabhijñā as a philosophy is highly mystic. Metaphysically the system follows a rationalistic approach. This system respects the authority of both Agama and Veda; yet at the same time, by emphasising the final requirements for the release of free-will, it avoids dogma, ignores predetermination, and supports voluntarism. In fact, it attempts to synthesise the contemporary philosophic trends. The Kashmir Śaivism, or Pratyabhijña, accepts 'Maya' of Vedanta, and the twenty-four Tattvas (categories),

together with the Purus of Sämkhya. Added to these, Pratyabhijñā admits of ten more Tattvas (principles, evolutes or catego- ries). Five of them are transcendental, and five are the limitation of the manifest. At the apex, of course, there is the inevitable One, the Absolute, the Siva. In fact no important system of contemporaneous thinking was ignored by the Kashmir system. The PratyabhijñāŚaivism, which we are about to elaborate, takes a careful note of all the best in Indian thought. It contains within its elaborately constructed system of metaphysics the realism of Buddhism, the mystic forms of Jainism, the rationalistic analysis of Nyaya, the Impressionistic approach of Vijnana. Vädin theory, the perfect monism of Vedanta, the Purusa-Prakyti concept of Samkhya with its range of properties, particularly the Gunas, and the aesthetic self-discipline of Yoga. Although it did not ignore Mimänsä, its open liberal view regarding the use of forms in worship reminds one of what later became known as Sufism and Sahaja. It does not despera- tely attack the Vedas and Brahmanism as Buddhism does; it does not uphold the priestly order as such; yet, while paying reverence to both the Vedas and the Brahmanas, it cuts through the caste system, and opens the spiritual world to all, through the authority of the Guru, or an emanci- pated teacher. The Supreme Light of Consciousness is self-luminous, independent and unlimited. This luminosity creates the coveted state of Bliss (Anandam). This Ananda-Sakti too is unlimited and unqualified. Besides these two manifest modes of Power there are three more: the Will-power (Iccha); the Power to comprehend and realise (Jnana); and the last the power that drives to act (Kriya). It manifests itself as effort, and is inspired to act against sloth. At a later stage opportunity will befound to examine these five forms of power in Greater detail.

Pratyabhijna Explained

The Universe as we know, and those Universes which we do not know, together, are Śiva manifested in His Sakti, much in the same manner as the darkness of space manifested the light of the stars, and the stars manifest the darkness, or the moon manifests its light and the light manifests the moon. Śiva manifests out of His Will,

and the manifested are jointly and individually His substrate. That is to say, the Will, the manifestation, the state before the Will, all are in Śiva. It is refreshing to recall that both Plotinus and Philo would be only too happy to know that in the Hindu system they would find their most fervent support.

If all are Śiva, why then this world of multiplicity, distinctiveness and discrimination? Sine-systems answer that the knowledge of multiplicity and distinction is due to Avidya, defective knowledge. To see the One as many is due to our failure in accepting and adhering to certain basic principles of knowledge. To know that is to get liberated from the ten- sion of multiplicity. Our minds are untrained and disorganised because of this lack of principles. Pratyabhijña is the power to realise these principles, so that the mind could comprehend the principles of Being and Becoming as two in One.

The realisation of a Perfect-Oneness leads Consciousness to experience a sensational stir. In the language of the Tantra of Cakra Sadhana, the 'sleeping serpent' uncoils itself from its long winter hybernation. Then does the nature of the Universe truly manifest itself. Then could one fully realise that, like the serpent coiling and uncoiling, the union comes into being, and goes out of being. The material universe integrates and disintegrates. The One principle remains constant. Modern Astrophysics shows awareness of the phenomenon of the cosmic process of formation, projection, dissolution and absorption of total solar systems.

The Thirty-six

Saivism, as has already been noted, accepts thirty-six primal properties, known as 'categories' or Tattvas. Scientifically these might be called substrates. These substrates include both matter and mind. Thinking of matter without mind is a primal illogic. Modern scientific thinking has yet to accept this fact before attaining truth in its sublimity. Kashmir Śaivism, accepts the thirty-sixth as the Apex of a gradual ascension. It pictures this apex as the primal root of an upturned tree, of which the

manifested world and its forms are but the branches, leaves, blossomsand fruits, with further secondary roots shooting down from the existing branches. Roots upon roots form bonds upon bonds. The manifest world of forms get tied up in dormancy and

sloth. The Ultimate Reality, Śiva, reserves the secret. Creation emanates as a mystery. Beyond the mystery is Šiva, proving that all manifestations project from the One.

The thirty-five modes are but the projections of the five principal modes of Sakti above referred to as Self Luminosity (Cit), Bliss (Anandam), Will (Iccha), Knowledge (Jhana) and Action (Kriya). Therefore, next to Siva in importance is Sakti, the reservoir of the Five-Modes. Sakti is the thirty-fifth mode; and Siva, as the thirty-sixth one, forms the final apex. Sakti is really neither the second to Siva, nor away from Siva. The more Sakti activises, the more Śiva's Reality gets blurred, in the same way as the clarity of water in a pond gets blurred when it is subjected to vigorous stirring. The Real Luminosity (Cit) gets dimmed due to the display of Sakti. The fact is that, Śiva and Sakti are not two. But, for the understanding of the Tattvas the two are numbered as the thirty-sixth and the thirty-fifth. Sakti separately quests; Ananda separately sleeps; till Sakti awakens it. For our formal com- prehension we see matter and energy as two; we feel that matter's sloth is agitated into energy and energy without matter is idle talk. Thus not only both of them are transferable; even more; they are inseparable.

For the other thirty-four Tattvas we have to wait. Without a Guru the way cannot be known. He baptises; he initiates; he administers the Dîkṣā. He admits to an order, and indicates the Way. Then the results of Spiritual knowledge gradually dawn on the mind of the lucky deserv ing, and the Soul gets free of bondage. In the Pratyabhijñā-system, as in the Vira-Saiva-system, the need for having a Guru or spiritual precep- tor, for the removal of ignorance, is indispensable. Together with the Guru's directional aid, the individual's intuitional skill is also important. But with all his intuitional skill, without the Guru's aid he remains zero. It is the Guru who, intellectually speaking, is in the nature of Reality, to be absorbed through the understanding of the seeker. In fact, the

Pratyabhijaa system emphasises on the acquirement of true knowledge with the aid of the Guru. Without knowledge what could happen, has been illustrated in Sarvadarśana
Samgraha by Madhavacharya through the following story:

A young girl fell in love with a young man whom she had never really seen. She had been hearing many reports about him from various quarters. As she listened; she got more and more enraptured about this young man, although she had to meet him yet.

A
time came when the idea about the young man grew into a fixation for her, and she could hardly contain herself from meeting him. She became love-lorn, and love- sick. She longed to 'meet' him.
She began to write to him. Eventually he replied. The language and the manner of the letters added to her longing for him. Her girl com- panions, realising her condition arranged for a tryst between the two.

The meeting proved to be a disappointment. Where was the man of her dreams? Where were the charm, the beauty, the polish, the irresisti- bility she had been imaging to herself, and she had been shaping herself for? This was an everyday man of life, common, and drab. The girl could not bear the disappointment and broke down.

Then the companions intervened. What had happened after all? The young man was the very person she had been hearing of, she had been dreaming of, and she had been
writing to. Why then this tragedy?

When she explained herself, the companions laughed at her. "The full knowledge of a personality is a process of an eternal discovery. It takes time to discover in person," they said, "what one idolises in a being. In spite of the fact that qualities are present, one has to be trained in the faculty of reception; and then alone one could expect the inspiration and thrill one had ideally composed and formed in the world of fancies. For the ideal to be real guidance was an imperative requirement."

The companions now joined their company, and a brisk conversation followed. A gay thrilling and electrifying period gave the girl all she sought to find in her man of dreams, thanks to the aid and guidance of the companions.

Similarly the talk, that the personal self is but the manifestation of the Universal self, does not appeal to those, who, in absence of guidance of skilled identifications, fail to recognise the Universal self in the personal self. This calls for a special training, which a Guru alone could give.

Such human efforts by themselves alone are not enough. The disciple, the preceptor and the blessings of the Divine Will, all three are essential for realising salvation. Without the Divine Will no personal effort by itself, could suffice for spiritual progress. Besides the powers of creation, sustenance and destruction of the Universe, God has powers of Conceal- ment and Grace. In fact, the other three powers are eternally and continuously enveloped in these two later powers. Grace is essential for revelation. The real nature of a person lies concealed in him; and as God's Grace descends on him, he finds, going along the path, the guide in the form of a Guru, who leads him to his heaven and salvation (Mokṣa). The technical term used in Kashmir Saivism for the descent of Grace is Sakti-Nipata. We shall hear more about it later. Ascension is impossible without descension. Eternal Grace descending, a person becomes an inspired Messiah, for whom alone Ascension remains a reserved transcendental mystery. Similar chain of thought provided a basis for Philo, for the concept of Logos and for the stand that the Pauline Churchassumed; and, of course, the Neo-Platonics, apparently in line with Pythagoras had been very emphatic about it.

In Christian theology much is heard about Ascension, which has acquired an Empirical meaning, more or less blindly believed. Nothing however, is heard about Descension, which is the underlying principle of Śakti-Nipata discussed above as descension of Grace. It is unfair to the believers to make them swallow Ascensions without the knowledge of Descensions. Had that been done, Christianity would be more a living faith, which it ought to be, than of a spreading faith, a dogmatic credo, which it is

anxious to prove itself to be. The expansionist urge of the European culture has enforced Christianity to be lost to a feverish race of expansion even at the cost of underrating the great necessity of a Guru. The ascetic stories of the days of the Alexandrian Church knew better, and produced celebrated saints. Guru's importance cannot be exaggerated. Hinduism in contrast is a vibrant challenge, a rational proposition, a knowledgeable way towards achieving a transcendental peace for others. It cannot be spread as it has to be understood; and to understand, needs effort; and degrees of effort individualises the person. Propaganda and cam- paign could prove effective in popularising a trade-mark, a tooth-paste, even a religious following; but the conquest of Peace and Happiness has to depend entirely on self-discipline, in-depth understanding and correct guidance.

Mokṣa according to the Pratyabhijñā system is the ideal Resurrection, a perfect freedom; it is going back to the original state, and be one with the original being. It is a return to the state of perfect purity, a stage of pure and chaste consciousness. "When thus the imagination of duality has vanished and he (the released soul) surmounts the illusive Māyā he is merged in Brahman as water in water; milk in milk. When thus through contemplation the group of elements is resolved into the substance of Śiva, what grief, what delusion, can befall him, who surveys the Universe as Brahman?"87

Pratyabhijña-Vedanta and Samkarācārya

It is evident from the above doctrine of Pratyabhijñā as expounded in the Kashmir mode of Saivism that it is more akin to the monistic idealism of Vedanta. It is almost the Advaita system repeated through Śaivistic arrangements of Tattvas. There is a strong opinion current amongst scholars that the exposition of the Pratyabhijñā system, in the manner it has been handed down to us, was much influenced by a visit paid by the saint scholar Samkarācārya (788 A.D.) to Kashmir. Others say that he never visited Kashmir. Samkarācārya was a resident of Kerala in South India. As such he was expected to be influenced by the Agamic Bhakti devotion. But he was a strong

Vedantin. When in South India therealism of Samkhya had been sweeping every other system of philosophic thinking, when ritualism and Brahmanism reacted against the atheistic Buddhism, it was Samkarācārya who by propounding the Advaita system reconciled the Buddhist anti-caste laws with the Brahmanical system of specialisation and privilege. In the south the philosophy of Śaiva Siddhanta, which later propounded Vira Saivism, tended towards the Samkhya system, in spite of Samkarācārya. Paradoxically it was in the North that through the Pratyabhijñå system Vedantic Monism (Advaita) gained importance.

Mysticism in Kashmir-Śaivism

Another remarkable feature that distinguishes the Kashmir-Saivism from the Vira-Saivism of the South, or from the Saiva Siddhanta, is its mystical tendency. The urbanised Iranian culture helped to spread over the area between Mesopotamia and Kashmir a delicately woven fabric of spiritual mysticism. It wore an aroma of sensuous ecstasy that reminds one of the roses of Arabia and Ispahan; its exclusive transience was like the tender grossameres that floated over the gardens of Baghdad, Bokhara and Samarkand. It had magic in its tendrilled utterances, colour and romance in its images and music. It affected philosophers and scholars alike. New poetry grew; new sects flourished. The mystic North, engaged in patterning a novelty in the area of ancient Śaivism, could not remain unaffected either. The Kashmir version of Saivism became mystical and delightful, aesthetic and sublime.

An idea, like a flash, disturbs this rather poised state of Saivic research. Kashmir, Iran, Sufism, pre-Islamic Arabia-in a chain takes the mind to Pythagoras, Plotinus, Plato, Philo and the Alexandrine stoics. Was it entirely impossible that the ideas between Egypt, Iran and Kashmir moved along the same channels as the commodities like saffron, sugar, silk, spices, ivory, camphor and frankincense moved? Of that later.

Mysticism must be free. The most free expression of the soul must be inspired, and must inspire cultivation of free-will. It does not count much for determination.

Mysticism and free-will acquire, through inspired guidance, a spirit of synthesis. A mystic does not flourish in arguments and polemics. The nature of a mystic finds no impetus for counter-acting or contradicting. It enfolds all differences to resolve into a synthetic whole of universality and oneness, Synthesis is, therefore, another virtue of Kashmir Saivism. It rejects all forms of dualism or pluralism. It seeks introversion, meditation, individuality and solitude. The self and the non-self, according to it must be unified in order to attain a state of perfect bliss. This is the Ultimate Reality, anuttara of Saivism,or, 'Siva' as it is called. Beyond Siva there is nothing. It is the 'given' of Berkleys' subjectivism; it is the 'external' reality of Kant ("Thing-in-itself).

Siva, therefore, is indefinable. It is not to be questioned; it does not provide an answer in speech, 'Vak' or 'Vaikhari'. It is untouched by Sputum Anucchiṣṭam'. "What is his name?" cried Moses before the bush fire. "What shall I say?" The reply might be carefully remembered:

"And God said unto Moses, I am that I am: and He said, thus shalt thou say unto thy children of Isreal, 'I am' hath sent me unto you.' Here I and you the personal self and the cosmic Self become one. "He is the name given of all," says the Veda. "In Him alone all beings resolve. He is the single reply to all questions."89

Universality of Mystic Realism

That this Realism could be realised by Self-discipline alone is em phasised in Saivism, in Vedänta, in Sämkhya, in Buddhism; this emphasis is similar to what could be traced to Moses enjoining rigorous self- discipline on his society as being the only means of attaining God." The mystic delight, the mystic bliss is not congregational. It is subjectively personal. Without discipline this delight of inner glory is unattainable. Has not Plotinus spoken of the One as too transcendent to fall within the reach of mind and speech?

"Blessedness and God are both the chiefest good, and are, therefore, identical. Men are made happy by the obtaining of divinity. They who obtain divinity become gods (a

theory, we shall later note believed by the Jangama Saivas). Wherefore every one that is happy is a God, but by nature there is only one God, but there may be many by participation (a typical Jangama view again)." These lines from Boethius (524 A.D.) leave us with no doubts about the Śiva idea spreading between the Nile, the Euphrates and the Narmadă, inclusive of the Byzantine cultural area of Eastern Europe. "All these forms are bathed in the luminous nectar of Blessed Joy," says the Upanisad. "From Joy alone spring all these Beings;" "The Real, the Conscious is the Joyous;" "He is but the Blessedness;" the Upanisad is a store-house for such remarkable utterances. To the joys of Siva-Agamas and the Siva-concept the same concept of identifying divinity with Grace, Blessedness and Joy has been engaging the mind of the world where Oriental mystic traditions prevailed. Sufism was just another form of the same philosophic trend.

Mystic ecstasy is the only form of this Realisation as has been evidenced by scores of mystics, irrespective of theological distances and divergent forms. Religious languages do differ; but not the spiritual experiences. In Experience, Realism and Idealism meet. Realism believes in an external Reality, which Śiva represents. Idealism maintains thatexperiences are products of form of thoughts, and as such are essentially intellectual and independent of the mind.

II

Kashmir-Śaivism is Realistic-Idealism

Realistic Idealism accepts all that is valid in subjectivism as well as realism. Subjectivism holds that materialism is impossible, and that reality is inviolable. And realism holds that the objective world exists independent of the individual mind. Realistic-Idealism holds both the views, and says that the world in which we live is merely a manifestation of the universal mind, and as such, is mental. But it existed independent of the individual mind and therefore it is real. It is very close to the 5th cent. controversy of Nestorian Monophysites.

Both mind and matter are, in the Spinozistic sense, attributes of the Real. 'Attributes' are the ways of looking at things. In this sense the Real itself could have no attributes, which are real. Yet through the ways of looking at the Real, attributes could be assigned, specially for giving speech forms to an inexpressible realisation. Real having no attributes could neither have mind, nor be of matter. Difference exists because of our self-reference. But from the point of view of Real, their differences are not the same as perceived by us. Hume was basically right in think- ing that whatever is distinguishable is divisible. But his entire approach is charged by objectivity, and is true only in so far as we are concerned. That which is referred to as the ineffable Real is not conditioned by our images of Him or Her, specially when He or She is the condition of all that is conditioned. This has to be fully understood yet.

Pratyabhijñā

What is Pratyabhijñā? It is an experience becoming The Experience Once in a life the moment comes, too subtle, too transient, too intimate to be recorded except by the few fortunate. Once travelling through the deep forests of South America I had unexpectedly met a tribal youth. As happens in such chance-meetings in completely segregated, but mystically lonely surroundings, we both stopped, and looked at each other. No suspicions, yet, no welcoming either. We stood on the threshold of recognition. We had no common language between us. Yet we succeeded in communicating, and passed some time together.

In the course of our 'conversation', the young man spotted out a small- bony piece tapering in one end, the whole piece being not more than three inches long. Ring after ring of bones appeared to have been stuck to- gether, the blunt end being about the shape of a pea. The boy insisted on my holding it on the palm of my hand. As I did so, I felt a vibration passing through my nerves. It appeared to be much more eloquent than just a reflex: more subtle, but entirely physical. This was, as I came to learn, the tail-piece of a South American rattle-snake which the boy had killed a day before. I

was surprised to note the presence and continuity of the reflex motor-action so vibrant over such a length of time after the loss of life of its parent.

I thus confronted two kinds of vibrations: one of the unexpressed words vibrating into meaningfulness; the other of the dead tail wherein life's motor had not completely shut down; one, abstractly based; the other physically based; but both were actively playing on my conscious being, and both were communicating in their own way. Vibrations shooting in waves of thrill relating life to life.

As I confront the basic Idea of 'Pratyabhijaa' I recall these experiences, only in an intellectually alerted field first; and then suggesting a reciprocal experience in the spiritual field of my deeper consciousness that transcends Being and Matter.

If the Buddha were asked about his moment of Bodhi (realisation), of the exact nature of the reflexive experience in his spiritually alerted transcendental being, he would perhaps remain silent to express himself, and that moment could be termed as the moment of Pratyabhijña, and that illuminating experience of liberation could be called Pratyabhijna. It is essentially an experience, and experience alone. Not a 'vision', but an experience. Let us examine, in this connection, two extracts:

(1) I sought a soul in the sea

And found a coral there;

Beneath the foam for me

And ocean was laid bare.

Into my hearts' night

Along a narrow way I

groped; and lo the light!

An infinite land of day !92

(2) All at once, without warning of any kind, I found myself wrapped in a flame-coloured cloud. For an instant I thought of fire, an immense conflagration somewhere closeby in that great city; the next instant I knew that the fire was in myself.

Directly afterward there came upon me a sense of exultation, of immense joyousness accompanied or immediately followed by an intellectual illumination quite impossible to describe. Among other things, I did not merely come to believe, I saw the Universe is not merely composed of dead matter, but is, on the contrary, a living Presence; I became conscious in myself of eternal life.93

Pratyabhijña etymologically means 'Perfect cognition'. In more intimate exposition Pratyabhijnd is the Experience of experiences. Percep- tion, conception and cognition are the three aspects of the total purpose of man's quest for arriving at an understanding with the self, vis-a-vis the world and the universe. In this quest the ultimate knowledge, claims Pratyabhijñā, is to realise that the soul and God are one and the same. In the language of St. John on the Cross, "the Union after Betrothal."94 No knowledge is worth the name without realisation. A realisation is not real unless attained through some practice. Mere subjectivity of knowledge has little relation with life unless that knowledge is put into action. Knowledge thrives on action. Speculation as an intellectual exercise contravenes the very ethics innate in the concept of Śiva, which has to be identified with a public weal, a public spirit, a public entity symbolising the fullness of Goodness.

Naturally, such an approach reminds one of Samkara's Advaita. The "Trika' philosophers of Kashmir worked along Samkara's inescapable way of spiritual guidance. We have already noted on the principal literary bibliography that survives as the accepted authorities of the Trika. Of these the Siva-Sutra the earliest treatise on Pratyabhijñā was discovered by Vasugupta in the 8th century. Vasugupta introduced Śiva-Sutra in his book Spanda-Kärikā. Later literature include Somānanda's (930

A.D.) Siva-Dreti (900 A.D.); Utpalächärya's Pratyabhijna-Satra; Abhinava- gupta's (960 A.D.) Paramathasara, Pratyabhijña-Vidhayint and Tantraloka: and lastly Siva-Sutra-Vimarşini and Spandasandoha by Kṣema Rāja.

Very little work has been done on modern lines on the subject of Pratyabhijñā, specially on its possible contribution on psychology and spiritual contentment in a materialistically motivated world. The in- depth appreciation of Pratyabhijñā and Spanda has a great message for students of meditation. Surprisingly enough, a proper study of Pratyabhijñā, in the light of two different sources of modern revolutionary thought, each a contradiction of the other, namely, existentialism and a materialistic dialectics, would yield startling results.

The first one enters deeply and profoundly into the dialectics of idea and existence with their respective sequence, and arrives at the conclusion that freedom, to be real, has to be absolute. Realisation ofhimself makes a man realise an individual type who is free to himself. To be free is to be absolute. The latter insists on the rights of an individual to demand complete existence as a unit within a social unit, by virtue of his honesty of purpose and pursuit. It grants, as a necessary corollary to this, the other the right to consider all opposition to this as reactionary and obstructive. Their removal, thereby, becomes a virtue. It believes that those who kept their experience hidden from themselves because of such excuses as predestination and predeterminism, are cowards. The courageous alone could act according to convictions. Realisation must be translated into action. Action for achieving freedom, generally, must be the 'religion' of those who feel free through realisation of liberation of the self. Material life is as much concerned with the Real life, as the latter has to be concerned about with its material balance.

The relations that Reality tries to establish with Experience, Ex- perience with Action, and Action with Perceptual knowledge form the subject matter of Pratyabhijña for which God-Realisation is not merely a spiritual end in itself. In this, Kashmir Saivism,

and its emphasis on Realisation and Experience, is distinct from the thrilling emotion of the Bhakti system of the Siddhantins of the South. Aware of the subjectivity of Monism, they, in recognition of their need and spiritual limitations, adhere more firmly to the Dualism of Siva-Sakti, Puruşa Prakyti, even inclusive of such important diversions as the Skanda-cult and the Ganapati-cult.

Although along the Himalayan belt, specially in the Eastern part of Bengal and Assam, the influence of Tibetan Tantra has remained an influential force, and although room for a Siva-concept has been found. within the Nätha and Pasupata cults of the Tantra-family, Pratyabhijnä retains its stern rationalism and materialistic analysis in propounding its spiritual content. The contribution of Pratyabhijñä to the spiritual delight of realising a fullness within the Self is a thrilling experience that adds meaningfulness to existence in body, spirit and mind. It can safely be said that the field of Pratyabhijñā still contains for the thinking man a virgin scope for a revealing and rewarding research.

Trika

Why is Trika called Trika? Obviously, this method of study of the Self's relation to the empirical world (Prapanca) has been laid out in three sections; hence Trika. But what are the three sections? There are several answers.

(i) One of them says that out of the ninety-two Agamas Trika recognises only three to be the most relevant and significant. These three are Siddha (Realised); Namaka (The Name world);

and Malint (The Garland).

(ii) Another school of thought regards Trika to be the analysis of the three concepts of (a) Sina (God); (b) Sakti (Power); and (c) Anu (Atom).

(iii) Yet a third school divides the concepts into (a) Siva (God); (b) Sakti (Power); and (c) Nara (Man).

(iv) There is a fourth group which makes a metaphysically mystical analysis which groups it into (a) Pará (Metaphysical); (b) Apara (counter-physical); and (c) Pardipard (Beyond metaphysical). (v) The fifth school of study of Trika classifies the knowledge into the three modes of knowledge of Reality into (a) Abhede (to know reality as non-Distinct); (b) Bhedabheda (to see Reality as one in the light of distinction); (c) Bheda (to see Reality as Distinct).

Trika, as a system has made two great contributions: Spanda, which has been partly discussed; and Pratyabhijñā. Together, these constitute the Kashmir system of Saivism, which coming much after the Southern Agamas, accepts the authenticity of the Agamas; but it came also after some of the most remarkable systems of thought which could be described as a precious human heritage derived from the Hindu metaphysical thinking. The Buddhistic Nirvana-vāda, the Jainistic Śúnya-vada and then the great tradition of Vedanta itself contributed much to the process of thinking which led to what is known as the Trika.

How did the Trika of Kashmir Saivism develop as a Metaphysical vintage apart? What actually had inspired the North Indian Himalayan thinkers? It has its own history.

The Cultural Syncretism

Let us halt awhile for taking a look at the Western frontiers of Asia immediately preceding this period, and find out the antecedents of this highly subjective method of thinking, which posed for its aim the ideal of arriving at the Reality of Causational World. This was not new to India. This was not new to Greece. Due to cultural, commercial, and above all historical reasons the thoughts of Greece and India found an opportunity for syncretic assimilation. This was new.

We have seen that the time of Vasugupta is late 8th cent. A.D. And we have noted that Vasugupta says that the Siva-Aphorisms known as Siva-Sutra has been conveyed to him through ancient traditions! The treatise Sisa-Satra as a compilation of aphorisms does not thus appear to be fundamentally Vasugupta's own system. His disciple

Khallääta (not a very Aryanised name anyhow like Nahapana, Castana) had compiled it in the name of Vasugupta. Then the system was elaboratedby later philosophers and scholars like Somānanda, Ramākāntha and Abhinavagupta. The date of the last was 960 A.D. Vasugupta's own book was named Spanda Sarvasva. And about the aphorisms compiled as Siva-Satra, in his name, Vasugupta himself says that he got them by the grace of Siva. In other words he ascribes their find to some divine intervention. Whatever that might mean, and in the accepted meaning of that probability he could have the Sûtras composed out to him in a moment of trance, it is clear that for their cogency and novelty, for their subjective finesse and subjective realism they had to be novel approach in Indian philosophy.

The Greek Influence

Dr. Radhakrishnan has referred to Neo-Platonism in connection with Kashmir Saivism in general, and with Trika in particular. We have in a former chapter dealt with certain main trends of the Greek metaphysical thought. We are about to deal with Neo-Platonism and Plotinus in some detail. We have to keep ourselves aware of the fact that this area, namely the Greco-Oriental area, inclusive of Egypt, and inclusive of Iran (Persia) with parts of central Asia influenced by Zarathustra and the Magi, had been under the subjugation of the Greeks. Alexander had started it. But that was 330 B.C. From 330 B.C. to the rise of the Achaemenids (558 A.D.) the Greeks had spread themselves out in this area in colonies after colonies. They had even built up their own cities, now known to the archaeologists under different names. Places like Ishpahan, Samar- kand, Bokhara were originally Greek cities with Greek names. 95 The dominions of the Parthians and Bactrians had been Greek. In India itself these Greeks had come to settle. Chandragupta Maurya had Greek soldiers in his army;96 and we hear of the Greek occupation of Mathura and Saketa in Panini.97 Indo-Greek marriages were a common feature sanctioned by the royal lead given by Chandragupta Maurya himself.

And the Iranians themselves were of Aryan stock. "That the Iranians have come from the East to their later home, is sufficiently proved by their close relationship to the Indians, in conjunction with whom they previously formed a single people."'98 Cox and Williams present both numismatic and philological evidence in support of this theory. In view of the Purana legends, where lives of Krsna and the Yadavas, or the miracles of Śiva have been described, we find mention of Persian names of persons, places and gods. Karusha, Palhavas, Gandharvas, Ayus Takṣakas, Nahuṣas are names quite familiar to the Purana reader. For the study of the culture of the Vedas and that of India it is a great error to consider Persia (Päriva Desa), Afghanistan, Baluchistan as 'different' countries; in that case Kashmir too would be considered different. Theadvent of a Central Asian Turko-Mongol chief Kanishka, his acceptance of Buddhism, and the acceptance by his descendents of Saivism, all go to show the influence of Hindu thoughts in these regions.

But during the period under our study, the same regions were under the political suzerainty of the Greeks. "In the first and second centuries before Christ, Syrians, Greeks and Scythians poured down into the Punjab, conquered it, and established there
for some three hundred years, this Greco-Bactrian culture."99 As a result it was quite an easy affair to have the Greek metaphysical ideas influence the Vedic Hindu ideas and forms. Not only their thoughts did meet; but even their Gods. This was the reason why we had prepared ourselves so painstakingly to study some of the Greek, Syrian and Babylonian Gods: Helios, Apollo, Zeus himself Marduk, Artemis, Gaea, Mithra, Proserpine, Bacchus and many others. We learn from Brihaddevata the extent to which the Greek fancy for images had been passed on to the lands of the Vedas. We learn from Huen Tsang the influence of the temple-culture in Northern India superimposing the Aranyaka and Buddha cultures.

The Achaemenids gave way to Alexander; Alexander's Greeks gave way finally to the Sassanians, when Ardesir wrested powers away from the decadent Selucids (224 A.D.). In the meanwhile the scene in India had undergone a great change. The

Kushana empire had given a new mould to Buddhism, and the Imperial Guptas had stepped in. It did not take even 500 years to carry the Indian scene of Vedic purism, and Buddhist monasticism to reach the gorgeous apex of the Kailasa temple of Ellora, where the sudden outburst of Saivic sculpture and architecture blossomed to amaze and fill the soul like the sudden outburst of spring after a white winter. Had the Islamic fanaticism spared Mathura, Saketa and Kasi, according to the records left by Huen Tsang, similar treasures of art would still be extant in North India, inclusive of Kashmir.

Zarathustra.

This was the time when in its Iranian home, and specially in Persia, the religion of Zarathustra lived a quiet life undisturbed by the proceedings of the outside world. Here the poems of the prophet (Zarathustra) and fragments of ancient religious literature survived, understood by the Magians and rendered successful by the faithful laity through the use of a modern dialect (Pehlavi). Here the opposition of the good spirit of Light and the demons of Evil-between Ormuzd and Ahriman-still remained the principal dogma of the creed; while all other gods and angels, however estimable their aid, were but subordinate servants of Ormuzd, whose highest manifestation on earth was not the sun-god Mithras, but the holy fire guarded by the priests. Mithra on horseback as a War-Godgives form to the iron-mailed Sun-God on horseback as is found in the temple of Konarak, and elsewhere.

The religion spread more and more. The Indo-Scythians in India clung to these gods, and spread the religion throughout their empire. In Armenia, Cappadocia, North Syria, Asia Minor, the cult Mithra with its mysteries, and the theology of Zarathustra, became the rage of the Latin speaking Empire of the Romans. The Solin Victus Mithras became so honoured a cult that for a while it was about to be considered the official religion of the Caesars. Nowhere the syncretic tolerance of the different religions is so pointedly observed as in the Persian religion of the time and in the Hindu religion, which liberally accommodated the religions of their cousins in political distress.

For at no time the immigrations of the ousted faithfuls were so large, or so frequent. Just when the Sassanids were continuing in power in Persia, just when the rage of the Mithraic religion and the Zarathustra philosophy had been sweeping over this vast area, two very important movements had been developing in the Greek world.

III

The Stoics

One of them was the movement of the Sophists. Zeno's date is third century B.C. But the men who really made Stoicism something vibrant lived much later. Seneca, Epictetus, Marcus Aurelius, who, belonging to the first and second centuries of the Christian Era, were not only contemporary philosophers of the times of the Sassanids of Persia, but had most certainly been fully conversant with the Buddhistic doctrines. "Nearly all the successors of Alexander-we may say all the principal minds in existence in the generations following Zeno-professed themselves Stoic."100 Stoicism became fashionable amongst the aristocracy. This is no place to enunciate Stoicism; but a student of Stoicism could easily discern in it two important functional traits: (1) Buddhism (except that, as the Stoics believed in God, the Buddhists did not have to bother with God); and (2) Saivism of the Kashmir pattern. If the earlier Stoics were more ethical than religious, later men like Chrysippur, Panaetius, Posedonius, Seneca and Epictetus gradually fell to the charm of Platonism. Who is a Stoic? Let us listen to Epictetus:

Show me a man moulded to the pattern of his judgementsthat he utters in the same way as we call a statue Phidian that is moulded according to the art of Phidias. Show me one who is sick, and yet happy; in peril and yet happy; dying and yet happy; in exile and happy; in disgrace and happy. Show him me; and by the gods I would fain see a Stoic. Nay, you cannot show me a finished Stoic; then show me one who is in the moulding; one who has set his feet on the path...let one of you show me the soul of a man who wishes to be at one with God, and to blame God or man no longer to fail in nothing, to feel no misfortune, to be free from anger, envy, jealousy-one who (why

wrap up my meaning?) desires to change his manhood for godhead, and who in this poor body of his has his purpose set upon communion with God. Show him to me. You cannot.

Yes we can. We the Hindus who have the Gitä. The lines above could be taken from any part of that great book, which is said to be the Cream of the Upanisads.

But something compromises my enquiry. Before we proceed, we pro- pose to draw the reader's attention to two of the phrases from Epictetus relevant to our subject. One, 'who wishes to be at one with God'. One with God, or So A-ham, Aham Brahmasmi are ideas peculiar to the Saiva Advaita-vadin. The Saiva-Monist subjectivises his spirit to the limit of total identification with the Supreme. The second phrase, 'to change his manhood for godhead'. Whatever was originally meant by Epictetus, in line with the early pagan practices of self-emasculation, so prevalent in the Greco-Asian and Egyptian world, it had been meant for that meaning by many of the later philosophers, who actually emasculated themselves in accordance with this injunction. The Hindu Saiva saints too follow rigidly the inner injunction of not only complete celebacy, but a hundred per cent sublimation of the libido in the interest of immaculate self-

surrender

leading to an immaculate experience of Joy. Doing without the limb of manhood by knifing it out is easier than eradicating, or living without the desirous lustful vision of sex.

The quest for Good alone in rejection of the worldly goods opens the Western Stoics to the pitfalls of deciding what is Good. They in their own way, attempt to decide by bringing in the subject of will as a driving force of good. (Note, gentle reader, the innate concept of Saivism here, Sakti as the driving force of Siva). But Will in itself is indifferent, or appears to be so; so the goodness of the Will is determined by the end it is engaged in pursuing. There apears to be a fallacy in this stand. It is begging the very question of what is Good. Russell calls it "an elemtent The Hindu law of the fundamentals of of sour grapes in Stoicism."101 the Gunas leaves the situation open; and man secures his own Good acting in consonance with the drive of his Gunas.

Meditation alone would secure him from the tension of the Gugas. "When the divine part of a man (Satta) exercises Will virtuously, this Will is part of God (Sa): which is free; therefore in these circumstances the human will is also free. "102

Plotinus and Neo-Platonism

The philosophy of Stoicism, which was very prevalent during those centuries when the Western part of Asia had been undergoing great political stress and strain, had also influenced the Greek colonies out- lying the immediate frontiers of Kashmir. But something more dynamic and more contemporary was affecting the religious and the philosophic life of this period. This was the philosophy of Plotinus. He was the father of Neo-Platonism, a system which was only too close to the Vedantic monism, and particularly to Abhásavāda, Pratyabhijnä and Spanda. In order to be convinced about this similarity we shall take the indulgence of quoting at length from some of the passages of Plotinus and his followers. Our study of the Persian history, Mithraism, Zarathustraism, Manichaeism becomes relevant now, as we notice this similarity. Our study of the large scale immigration of the people of this area, too, now gathers meaning.

Plotinus was living in 204 A.D. Between 204 and 430, when St. Augustine died, Europe had faced its worst catastrophe, which threw the great continent into the Dark Ages. All this was due to those devastat- ing attacks of the Asiatics and of the constantly threatened Goths who cared very little for the so-called invincibility of the Roman arms, or the superiority of a civilisation which used its might for expansionism, and used its own way of life for dehumanisation of the most enlightened sections of the world; where slavery was a proprietorial right; and franchise was carefully limited to carefully arranged vested interests. Under the attacks of these virile horse-riding people from Asia the Roman empire, and with that the vaunt of European superiority, crumbled like a pack of cards before a tropical storm. The best of the minds, naturally sought for shelter. They had to run for safety to India and Persia. And the Persian Emperor gave them immediate shelter. The Greek colonies were in great need for fresh

blood from the motherland. They actually welcomed the surge of the scholars in these Persian colonies of the Greeks. This leaves us without any doubt that at this period a new wave of Greek thought had percolated through the Greek colonies of Asia, and reached India through Kashmir and contiguous states of Gandhär and the Punjab. This area, like Egypt in the West, was a centre of syncretism, where alien thoughts were subject to a commercial give and take. We shall specially refer to the works of St. Cyril, Boethius, Philo and Origen, and examine how close Neo-Platonism sounded to the Kashmir Trika.

The father of Neo-Platonism, a Greek theory of the greatest importance for our understanding of the Kashmir Saivism, was actually an Alexandrine of third century (204-70); and for three centuries this last and final blossom of Greek thought continued to exercise the minds of the world. Many consider Ammorius Succus to be the master mind behind Origen, Philo, Boethius, St. Cyril and partly St. Augustine, all of whom had been affected by Neo-Platonic ideas. The area over which Neo-Platonistic ideas had spread its influence covered almost the entire old world, specially the world over which Greece and Rome had their sway. It was, in a way, a revival of Platonism and Pythagoreanism; a studied combination of the best of the old and the new.

It laid stress on (a) hope of salvation from the ills of earthly life; (b) a rationalistic understanding of the Divine Principle; and (c) lastly, to love this Principle, and seek union with it. Like Plato it did not define any God, nor did it allocate any habitat for such a God. Neo-Platonism demands a greater intimacy between soul or souls and the abode of the godhead. The days are gone when Neo-Platonism could be brushed off as 'fantastic thaumaturgy', or 'a hybrid between Hellenic mysticism and Oriental superstition'. Mysticism is no longer regarded as something to be laughed at. Many regard Mysticism as the future religion of mankind.

Plotinus, originally an Alexandrian, taught in Rome, and the books he left are known as Enneads. At the time he had been teaching, hardly any doubted how far-reaching

would be his inferences and conclusions, which gathered together the best of the Eastern and the Greek thoughts.

Eversince the intellectual world had been engaged in analysing the nature of world and man, its thinkers had been following two different tracks: one, Man, the feeling personality, the sufferer, the enjoyer, and the machine driven by his senses; the other was Man, who lives an eternal life beyond his body; who is a Spiritual being; for whom suffering or enjoyment is just a temporary disturbance created over an ocean of cons ciousness, the innate nature of which is Sublimity. This division between the sensible and the spiritual, we know, is best described by the two Hindu systems of Samkhya and Vedanta; and is a corollary, or better still, a supplementing authority to the theoretical Samkhya, and the practical Yoga aphorisms of Patanjali.

Platonism seeks to cut through this controversy; and makes a con- vincing compromise between the two. "It is necessary," says Plotinus, "that each principle should give of itself to another; the good would not be good; spirit, spirit; soul, soul; if nothing could live dependent on the first life." This declaration provides the sheet-anchor to Neo-Platonism. The universe in its totality is harmonious and Good, and all that is discordant in it is due to fragmentation, and failure to consider this total good. The world of senses, according to Plotinus, is not really real. but could be taken to behave as such, only up to the limits of our limited senses. The whole takes thus the position of appearances, which though not illusory, yet are only partially real. Are our sense faculties not partially aware? Partially, and individually? Is not 'difference' inher- ent in our sense faculties? This partial and incomplete sensibility, hindered by the limitations of senses is the cause of ignorance, suffering and lack of wisdom. To comprehend the immensity of this knowledge, mental powers do not suffice; spiritual power has to be sought for. The immensity of the comprehension of the Real is total; similarly, in the mental world too, the mind, and the object that the mind perceives, at the moment of realisation together form an inseparable experience. This theory, brings us only too near Pratyabhijñā.

Herein lies Plotinus' great abhorrence of dualism of any kind. Things exist because mind comprehends them. Mind makes and finds what it makes. Things have no reality except what mind makes out of them. In the whole of Greek philosophy, before Plotinus, the doctrine of subjective idealism cannot be traced; yet as a basis of Vedanta and specially of Yoga, the Indian thinkers insisted on Thou art That: the -ism of a substance is your Self; it is how you make it, and see it, and understand it; and you don't until you become it. It is, at that moment, not for you; but even more; it is you. If there is an imperfect apprehension, the seed of the imperfection lies in the imperfection of the being of the object itself. The imperfection of knowledge about an object is in strict proportion to the imperfection underlying the object, which is what it is, by 'betraying' its subjectivity; by 'not' being what it should have been.

The doctrine comes even closer to Abhasavāda when it uses the same simile. "The sense world is real, not because it is known by mind, but by the grace of the creative soul informing it. It is the mirror that reflects, though in a glass darkly, the world of spirit. Things that 'are' have been in the soul; what is happening is only Recognition" (Pratyabhijñā),104

The 'Source' in Neo-Platonism

Our experiences only point us to a Source. The concept of Mala (impurity) and Nirmala (Purity) in Saivism has its correspondence with Neo-Platonic concepts of gradations according to 'perfections' and 'imper- fections'. These gradations are related to the degree of activity; for every- thing is active in proportion to the imperfection underlying it. This is again the theory of Tamas and inertia of Samkhya. Only the Perfect could be Tranquil. The principal gradations of beings, according to Saiv- ism are Sattva (light), Rajas (Agitation) and Tamas (ignorance and inertia). The Cause, therefore, has to be more perfect than the effect. And the effect to be perfect, has to reach nearer and nearer to the Cause of all causes, i.e. the Source. There is a line in the Gita which says: Even a little of this principle saves from fearsome degradation.105 This exactly appears to be the view of Plotinus. He too said that in this progress from

effectual degradation to more perfect causes there is only going from a state to a less degraded step. No reactionary draw-back keeps the progress halted. It is a fact that all results are products from causes. There is no doubt whatsoever that the final Cause is the True Home of all progress, "Like is known by like, and draws like to itself. The creative source is always the final goal. The One is the beginning and the end, the Alpha and the Omega of the universe. The whole creation 'groaneth and travaileth together' in a desire which the rest in the One alone can satisfy."

Release from the Bondage (Pasa) had almost been the craze of the age. Every other philosopher mentioned that to be the aim, as they also mentioned of an upward progress. The Kundalini Yoga of the Cakras also mention this upward progress: Body is a sensible prison-house; and the Soul, although individual, is not of matter, and its realisation belongs according to a supersensible sphere. It is essential and abstract; but is aware of all changes without itself changing. Merged in carnality, and all the confusion that it implies, it retains its purity, which ever and ever awaits a final redemption. Whatever is created is in God; and finally is to be one with God. Hence 'longing' is a feature of the Spirit.

Longing for the Beyond: Ascendance

Cetak Samutkanthate, says the mystic lady Sila Bhattärikä (my heart is longing and longing). "Not a moment more could I linger without Him, my Hari," says Mira, the Saint of Rajasthan. St. Theresa, who refers to the ascending stages before the final union, also 'longs' for the Union. So says Plotinus. The wanderer from God, the soul,like an amphibiousbreath, lives an immortal life within a mortal garment. His progress towards the great illumined Source lies through a process of continuous detachment. Reminding us of the steps of Patanjali, Plotinus says: first the senses, then the body, then the objects of the senses, then even the conscious self (Armita); finally, leading to the Ocean of Consciousness alone, self-effulgent, and self-aware.

Where the seer and the seen are one.... Strip thyself of every- thing.... In this state the seer does not see, or distinguish, or imagine two things; he becomes another, he ceases

to be himself and to belong to himself.... We ought not even to say that he will see, but he will be that which he sees.... If then a man sees himself becomes one with itself, he has in himself the likeness to itself; and if he passes out of himself, as an image to his archetype.

he has reached the end of his journey.... Such is the life of gods, and of godlike, and of blessed men, a liberation from all earthly bonds, a life that takes no pleasure in earthly things, a flight of the alone to the Alone.106

Plotinus could follow this classification only deviating from his master Plato. For Plotinus objects do not have existence apart from the Spirit. That is to say in the least of the things there is the presence of the Spirit. It is a question of being aware of the Perfect Spirit un- encumbered with the atomic objectivity, which form only the 'prison, house', the body. To be free from it, and realise the perfect Union, is Liberation.

Plotinus analysed the ascendance of the soul from its body-prison through three stages, called Hypostates. The first one of these takes the soul as the general consciousness underlying the gross physical bodies. It is the Universal soul. At this stage the Soul abides with the formative principles (Known as the Logoi which account for the generative causes: Prakrti or Müla Prakrti of the Hindus). This could be the Sakti of the Saivas. The second Hypothesis assumes a cosmic Mind, a divine mind. This mind for the first time recognises the oneness of the subject and the object. 'I am It is the feeling attained through this state. "The distinction of thinker and thought implies even in perfect self-consciousness, a difference of aspect, and points to a yet higher principle of absolute simplicity called by Plotinus 'The One', the Father, the Good;"10" which last is called by the Pratyabhijña Saivists as Šiva, which also means, of course, Good. When it is one, it is a source of unity (Suddhavidya); as Father it is Primal cause of all existence (Sadasiva); and as Good it is the Supreme, Final, Apex (Siva). At this stage no words could describe It; all that could be attempted in language for its description is bound to be negative.

Compare Brhadaranyaka II: 3: 6:

The form of this person is like a saffron coloured robe, like white wool, like the 'Indragopa' insect, like a flame of fire, like a white lotus, like a sudden flash of Lightning. He who knows it thus attains splendour like a sudden flash of lightning. Now, therefore, there is the teaching, not this, not this, for there is nothing higher than this, that He is not this. Now the designation for Him is truth of the truth. Verily the vital Breath is truth, and He is truth of that.108

We note with some amount of surprise that it is not only in the Negative description of not this that the Kashmir Siddhanta, Plotinus and the Brhadaranyaka Upanisad are one, but the remarkable phrase of Brhadaranyaka, viz., attains splendour like a sudden flash of lightning, is a symbolic idiom, which any student of Plotinus would recognise imme- diately to be his favoured expression.

This description of the Brahman as not this is not peculiar to Plotinus alone. This Upanisadic teaching finds favour with the Fourth Gospel, in its insistence that God works in the world through Logos...who is himself God though not the Godhead (Prakrti?). "The absolute Nothing which is above all existence" (Pseudo-Dionysius); "God because of his excellence could rightly be called Nothing" (Scotus Erigena); "Our soundest know- ledge is to know that we know him not" (Hooker),109 If there are contradicting opinions regarding this view in Christianity, there are contradictions to this view amongst Hindu philosophers too; Ramanuja for instance. But we are not out here to prove who is correct, but to survey the extent and influence of the Indian Saivic metaphysics and the fact of its closeness with the early Christian philosophers.

Shelley in his Adonais speaks of this theory of the soul's progress towards light through shedding the atomic load of matter, grade by grade:

That light whose smile kindles the Universe

That beauty in which all things work and move

That benediction which the eclipsing curse

Of birth can quench not, that sustaining Love Which through the web of being blindly wove By man and beast and earth and air and sea, Burns bright or dim, as each are mirrors of The fire for which all thirst; now beams on me, Consuming the last curse of cold mortality. But apart from any academic controversy on Neo-Platonism, it is indeed a deeply
satisfying experience for the student of Saivism to listen to kindred spirits in other climes, and times, and in other churches. Historians would, inevitably search for the dates, and exercise unnecessari- ly the ego of chauvinistic sectarianism, but the fact stands that the tradi- tion of Siva-ism runs straight from the Vedic Rudra, and the Svetasvatara Upanisad; and that the bases for the Saivic doctrines in Hinduism are drawn from the Agamas. A fifth-century-A.D.-Pallava inscription of Conjeevaram mentions the existence of the Agamas. And the texts of the Agamas project so much spiritual maturity, and dependence on ancient traditions (Gurus) that there could be no
doubt whatsoever that from the Vedas to the beginning of the Christian era an uninterrupted Saiva tradition had been enriching the metaphysical world of Indian thought. Even Alexandria's interest in it is reflected in the Saivic archaeological evidences found in Abyssinia, Somalia and the Upper Nile (see Plates 1, 2).

Advaita in the Arabic World

Throughout this period we notice minds engaged seriously in the task of probing into the nature of God in its relation to man. During this period Man has been found to be trying to elevate himself, and rise to the level of the Source, by the dual forces of knowledge and love. The thought that surprises and intrigues many a scholar is how the One could have any desire, even of descending into the many forms which together make the world. The answer is given in the Upanisad, "The One' desired to be Many,

And this very answer is heard from Plotinus when he says, "The One could not be alone". Few suspect this thought to be of hundred per cent identity with the Upanisads (Brhadaranyaka). "The Word (Legos) was made flesh, and dwelt amongst us" (St. John), St. Augustine expresses surprise at this statement;11 but St. Augustine had not studied the metaphysics of Sakti and Siva, and the question of the five stages leading to the stage of Parnahanta. Only Kashmir Šaivism gives it.

The Cultural Syncretism:

Arabia-Persia-Egypt-Greece

It will be interesting to halt here for a while, and observe some historical sequences which could have important bearings on the develop- ment of the Trika. The Trika as we have noted, flourished between 800 A.D. and 1000 A.D. During these two hundred years, and for another four hundred years of Sassanian rule in Persia, Kashmir had to absorb a number of influences from Parthian, Bactrian, Persian, and what is now known as, Afghan territories, and which was then known as White-India. 113
Al-Mansur, the Arabic scholar of Baghdad, got the Siddhantas translated into Arabic. The fact that a West-Asian cultured language like the Arabic had translated the Saiva Siddhanta, and that the translator was no other person than the encyclopaedic Al-Mansu., shows that, more than Neo-Platonism, it was on Saivism that the Arab world relied on as original source for the Neo-Platonic monistic approach to God as love and Good.. The use of Sifer' or Zero (Cypher) as a numeral was a contribution of Hindu mathematics. It proves, amongst many other facts, the continuity of commercial links between India and the Middle East, which also in- fluenced the cultural life of the region. Al-Baruni, Avicenna and several other Sufi mystics admit of their indebtedness to Hindu thoughts. Chris- tian mystics like Oregon, and Philo made Christians take a second look at the Gospels. For doing so St. Cyril was almost being excommunicated; and St. Augustine set forth many problems. So was the case with the Koran "What might be called the Moslem Enlightenment had its proximate origin in a strange dispute. Was Koran eternal or created? Philo's doctrine of Logos as the time-less

wisdom of God (compare Vaikhari of Saiva Siddhanta), the Fourth Gospel's identification of Christ with the Logos with the Divine Word, or Reason, that was 'in the beginning.... God', and 'without which was not anything made that was made', or of the Gnostic and Neo-Platonic personification of Divine Wisdom as the agent of Creation; the Jewish belief in the eternity of the Torah-all conspired to beget," (as in orthodox Islam, so in Hindu thinking of the contiguous region of Kashmir) a correlative view that Word as Nada had always existed. Word is Sound, Sabda; and Sound is eternal. Logos is Word; Word is Vaikhari; Vaikharf is the vocal expression of Cosmic Consciousness, which is the One, God, Śiva.

We could discern here the beginnings of the analysis of Sound, Speech and meaning as expounded in the theory of Spanda. The Hindu philo- sopher with the aid of Hindu grammarians attempted to rationlise the con- troversy through the traditional references to the Vedas. But we could see that the emergence of Spanda in Kashmir was not entirely sudden, or unconnected with correlated historical events of the region.

The same could be said of the Pratyabhijaa theory also. Near about 803 A.D. in the town of Kufa in Mesopotamia was born a genius of great versatility, known for a wide range of erudition. His name was Abu Yusuf Yakub-ibn-Ishaq al-Kindi. He was acquainted with Plato's thoughts, and wrote 'An apology for Christianity. His 'Optics' was translated by Roger Bacon. Al-Kindi revived the Neo-Platonistic idea of the spirit, having three stages of purified consciousness a strange reminder of a similar gradation in Pratyabhijñā and Trika.

The ferment of Philosophy made Baghdad the Mecca of divine specula- tion during the 9th and 10th centuries. The impossibility of maintaining any open-mindedness regarding the Koran and its underlying beliefs could neither altogether silence active thinking, nor block an intellectual school of thinking from discussing the danger of submitting faith to beliefs without appeal to rationality. In a society where the law, the government and the ethical individuality are submitted to an unified centre of power,

totalitarianism smoothers the free growth of public-opinion and cultivation of reason. Terrible purges in our times have been justified by political expediency.

In those fervent years of Baghdadian controversy sheer force of the Arab conquest decapitated many a wise head. Greek gnostics, Christian rationalists, Persian patriots, Magdakite communists, the ascetic Mani-s all were brought down to the single level of conformity through the imposition of Islam, which, at that early stage, had the argument of the sword to support it. It had no choice. It had gone tired of polemics and casuistry. But the fact is that its monistic equality of classes in Allah's eyes set free millions of slaves and serfs who hoped to breathe an equal air in a society of justice and plenty. The union of the Meccavites and the Baghdadites was a historical impossibility. The East stuck to their old way of disputation. As a result the Shiahs of Persia were made an example. The Shrine of Hussein was destroyed (851 A.D.); Jews and Christians were asked to wear distinctive dress to mark their alienism from Islam. They saved themselves from annihilation at the cost of humiliation. Predeterminism and Post-mortem of divine justice confined the brief cycle of life to the strict capitulation to faith and faith alone. If the Arabic culture still retained a harem and a slave- market it was because the commercial interests always prove to be of more value to ruling monarchy than mere ethical or religious values. Islam preached equality; commerce meant affluence of a few.

Naturally philosophical questions regarding God, Neo-Platonic Ideal- ism, Pagan pantheism, or Zoroastrian asceticism, fled the land, and escaped to the liberal habitat of Hindu India's open valleys. (In those early days, long before Rousseau or Nietzche, a great controversy raged in the Islamic world.) The controversy really centred around the proof for a necessity of God, and a rationale regarding God, and the mechanics through which God could operate. Scholastic Islam spoke through Abul-Hasan-al-Hasari (873-935), Muhammad Abu Nasr-al-Farabi, Saifu'l-Dawla, the great Abu Yusuf Yakub-ibn-Ishaq al-Kindi, Ibn Hanbal, and above all Avicenna (Ibn-Sina) who came to India 'for a more complete learning'. Inter alia these scholars took courage to raise such fundamental queries as immortality, nature of God, Logos and Soul.

Al-Kindi believed in the three grades of spirit: God; the Creative World-soul (Logos) (Siva-Prapanca-Sakti); and its emanation, or the Soul of man. This reflects Trika; and this is what the Jangama-Saivism would later propound strongly. Al-Farabi spoke of the First Cause. He men- tions, like Sämkhya and the Greeks, a Prime Mover without having to move (Siva and Sakti); and that unity is presupposed by multiplicity. The ultimate aim of philosophy is knowledge (Jnana) about Sat (Real), or Siva (Good), the first Cause.

What happened in the Islamic revolution, was repeated again and again, more mildly through the presence of Confucian and Buddhist strains which were cultivated in the various important colonies spread throughout the Si Kiang, and the Amu-Dariya valleys. This was precisely the area where the Parthian and Bactrian Greeks had ransacked a more ancient heritage. Large Vihāras (monasteries) and Universities in and around the frontiers of India made Kashmir an important base for experi- menting with such theological tenets as would effectively challenge the Vedic polytheism, priestism and the imposed rigidity of the caste hierarchy. Upanisad and Vedanta gave the answer. Hence the great Kashmir school of Saivism developed along Vedantic monism and evolved such subtle theories involving the mental personality of man as Abhasavāda, Spanda and Pratyabhijnd (ie., the Trika). Although the Siddhantas, as the ancient treatises on Saivism did receive their due and full regard in Kashmir, yet, in interpreting the Siddhantas, the Kashmir tradition adopt- ed a unique favour for monism which is characteristic of Vedanta, Šamkara, Neo-Platonists and Islam.

No one could yet be definite about the subjective relation between the Pratyabhijna and Trika, and the abstractions of the Babylonian school of Islamic philosophy; but to the student of comparative religion the geographical continuity appears to be remarkable, especially when Kashmir has remained one of the foremost habitats of the Hamadani school of Persian Sufism and Babylonian philosophy, together with Monistic Vedanta and the mystic Neo-Platonism.

IV

Realised Prophets, and Reality

"The wisdom set forth in the Trika philosophy is originally the self- knowledge of Reality expressing itself, though distorted and deformed, as the Sastras as we know them" now. The Real could be realised in the Real alone. No unreal could substitute the Real. Anything out- side of the Real could not 'explain' the Real. Real alone is its own know ledge. The knowledge of Reality is thus a 'thing in itself"; "knowledge in itself. It is 'It experiencing it'; 'I experiencing 1'. This type of knowledge is the Prophet's domain. He declares it to be 'Revelation'; his words constitute 'Revealed Knowledge', Veda, Svayamprakasa (Self-enlightened), Apauruşeya (Super-human). In this sense only the prophet could say and accept that the Vedas have no authors; and the prophet is a Messenger, or a Son of God,

This Reality has been variously described by various terms in various systems of thought. Some of these are quite interesting; and all of these are used to refer to 'Siva'. We examine here some of these precious terms.

Anuttara-That which has no 'next' or 'further'; Cit Perceptive intelligence; Caitanya-Consciousness; Siva-Good; Para-Samvid-Ulti- mate intelligent consciousness; Paramesvara-The Paramount Immanence. Thus the Siva-concept includes Soul or Atman, Bliss or Anandam, Lord or Pati. The transcendent aspect of Reality is Šiva, and the immanent form is Siva, which, as Power, is always in the state of perfect identity with Sakti. The two could be separately conceived only as Life and Matter, or Time and Space; or the Moon and its light. When we are forced to speak of Siva and Sakti separately, as light and heat (of fire), we become aware of the limitations of the Pasyanti (articulate language), and the excellence of Para, Vaikhari (the sound beyond language). Limitation of language alone forces us in the interest of Self-preference to speak in terms of duality about the unit Siva. Šakti is this 'spoken'-form in Isvara-Pratyabhijñā, as the heart (Hrdaya), or the essence (Sara) is Šiva.11 Sakti, the spoken, is the Logos; and Siva, the reality, is God. "Śiva is the Reality inherent in all, and is not one among many deities, or a decorated image which is only a help to the

uninitiated." That Siva has been named as the Primal God (Adideva), or the God of the gods (Devadera), or the Supreme God (Mahadeva) is quite significant to the Hindu..

Cit is conscious perception that Illumines, brings light over ignorance, and removes all doubts. It must, therefore, also be intelligent. It augurs intelligence, consciousness, Caitanya. Cit is also Caitanya. If Cit is the Pure-Siva aspect, Caitanya is the Sakti aspect. Caitanya is the mirror on which Reality finds itself reflected. He is never the reflection; the reflec- tion is not He.

It is customary in Hindu Bhakti Sastras (religious ritualism and emotional spiritualism) to regard Sakti and Caitanya as feminine; and Šiva as masculine, although it is admitted that these concepts are eternal and limitless and genderless. No limit, either of time, body, or sex, or nature, could affect the abstract spiritualism of the Siva-Sakti concept.

The female Śakti is called Cit-Soarûpa, (Cit in form); Cit-Asraya (Resorting to Cit). This aspect contains some active or activising proper- ties such as Cit (Conscious perception); Ananda (Joy); Iccha (Will); Jñana (Knowledge); and Ariya (Activity); the five aspects which counter-balance the five aspects of Śiva already described. Sati is Šiva's part and parcel, but not Śiva's subordinate. As Will she is here; independent; Swatantra (Independent), Suairint (Self-owned), Icchamayt (Woman of Will). (Because of the knavery and roguishness of some fraudulent spiritualists (sic!) the metaphysical import of these words have been designedly twisted to mean association of prostitutes and loose women as imperative in certain Tantra practices. Yet at the same time, such misuse of the texts could not debar any person from undergoing the spiritual discipline of either Tantra or Trika because of any sex distinction.)

Vimarṣa: Abhasa: Spanda

As the Lady-in-Will (Techamayf) she is the Source-Will, the Will-Power. She wills to be. She wills to split into many. Her emanations in forms do not interfere with her intact and inviolable totality. Emanation of Will into many is known to be due to

Vimarsa, or the vibrations of her Will- Power. Vimarsa is the metaphysical phenomenon of the One's being also various at the same time. In ten buckets of water the one moon appears to be ten; in one fire, the same fire becomes a hundred flames of a hundred shapes; and it undergoes a hundred changes. Change is Vimarsa: variety is Vimarça. Šiva is aware of himself in his comprehensive ego through Sakti's Vimarsa. Mutability is not multiplicity, plurality, changefulness or disintegration. The sense of 'I' is nothing but the sense of Reality emotionalised as a distinct individual; and this happens when Siva notices his reflection in Sakti. The awareness of its own potentiality for issuing forth into a variety of power and form creates the all-pervading ego known as 'I' which reflects Siva on Sakti. As this is a distinct feeling that is not Real, but which just 'Reflects', it is known as 'Bimba'; and as the universe is a projection out of this 'Bimba', it is known as Pratibimba, or reflection (as in a mirror), or Abhara, a secondary reflection, like shadow or a mirrored form. This system of the Trika metaphysics is, thus, known as Abhasa-vada or Pratibimba-väda, the system of understanding the Reality through the analogy of reflection and light,117

The Trika philosophy accepts the Universe as Abhasa; a system of sub- jects and objects. Unless one is aware, there is no existence. Existence and its meaning is dependent on awareness. Trika calls the subject received as (Grahana); and the objects as the received (Grahya). All that 'T', as subject, is aware of, is only a reflection of the source of all awareness, Siva. 'T' exists only in relation to 'Not-I' or "That' or 'It'. In a world without 'It' (or the world), 'I' depends on the presence of 'Not-1'. 1, the apprehender, can apprehend, only when something apprehensible exists. This distinctive 'throb' of apprehension, the actual coming into shape of an individual object from out of an ocean of awareness, is known as the Spanda, the vibrating thrill of Vimarsa, or the Realisation that "I am; because I find that I am facing the many" all of which are enlightened by the same apprehension. In simple words this has been stated
in Bhakti as "To see all in one, and one in all;" or, in a mystic's language,
To see a world in a grain of sand,

And a heaven in a wild-flower, To hold Infinity in the palm of your hand, And eternity in an hour.-Robert Blake. This leads to the supreme Truth. To Realise I' is to Realise and substantiate Siva,
which alone is the Reality.

Siva is the 'still' (Sthanu); 'Sakti' is the 'urge' for change (Vimarga). Once conceived, it is not at all difficult to apprehend Sakti together with the inherent property (dharma) of Siva. This 'inherence' or 'innateness"

is called Tadatmya. This Sakti is the womb or Toni or Mahad-Brahma; out of this 'Matrix' spins out Samsara, the whirl or flux of creation, so that no substance is away from Sakti, and all substances retain Sakti in alert or inert proportions. As in mathematics a negative is also a quantity, so in spirit even apparently inert objects like a stone or plants, or 'dead' bodies are not entirely 'free' from Sakti. He who believes that a dead body is free from change does not fully comprehend the necessary meaning and func- tion of change. As long as 'existence' is, Sakti is. Expression, multiplica- tion or plurality is Sakti's inherent attribute, and property. Attributes are expressions of Sakti. (In iconographical language, as already explained before, attributes are often expressed through symbols, such as weapons, extra-limbs and decorative ornamental
details.)

In the Prakasa (Revelation-Light)-state the same Sakti finds herself expressed; and such revelations (Prakasa) point out to the Unity of 'One in. All'. As soon as we discriminate, we are under the power of Sakti's state. (Vimarsa Refraction; straight, easy, normal progress halted and reversed by outside obstruction or accident;

catastrophe that obstructs progress; obstruction that reverses light's progress,
mutation.) This Vimarsa state causes us the spiritual obstruction against looking at things without discrimination. In other words, clear sighted revelation gets confused through the superfluous changes that occur to Sakti through

Vimarsa.

Self-Consciousness assists Vimarga to flourish as emphasised, or blown-up Ego, before which spiritual knowledge, realisation, submits as light before obstruction, or river before rocks. One river becomes many because of these obstructions. That which has the sense of 'T', is subject to Vimarsa. The inanimate has no Vimarsa. Mere animation has not enough Vimarsa. When self-consciousness becomes fully developed ego, Vimarsa is at the apex. The sense of wonderment (Camatkyti) is Vimarsa's refined expression. We see things as we would 'like' to view them. In indulging in descriptions and adding epithets we but project our self-conscious individual ego. "The-thing-in-itself' gets covered up with ensembles we ourselves design. The one becomes many out of Will; and the 'many' becomes 'many more' because of the egoistic sensitivity that discharges interpretative attributes.

O Lady! we receive but what we give,

And in our life alone doth Nature live;

Ours her wedding garments, ours her shroud. S. T. Coleridge

Five Aspects of Conscious-Power

The principle of manifestation inherent in Sakti assumes the five aspects of self-consciousness. This power entails (1) wonderment (Cit);

from which the state of bliss, or (2) joy (Ananda) is realised. The realiser is Siva, the Still and the Inert. That which 'is' realised, the feeling, is Sakti's attributes or aspect. Since this wonderous, satisfying ecstasy has a tonic effect on consciousness, it accumulates the urge to evolve, spread and grow, which provokes (3) Will or Iccha, the basic Power that procreates. It is the substantial base of all creativity, all art. "From Ananda is the universe created." But the Will to create for Anandam is dependent on the knowledge of good or bad, proper or improper. Hence (4) Jñana or knowledge is the fourth aspect which initiates (5) Action or Kriyd. The world of mundane mind

depends more on such powers as Will, Knowledge and Action (Iccha, Jñana and Kriya Saktis) than on the first two powers: Cit and Ananda. These first two therefore retain the ultimate spiritual fascinations; and together with the Real become the Ultimate Siva or Saccidanandam. (Sat+Cit+Anandam Real+Conscious+Bliss.)

On this identity with the Ultimate rests the spiritualists' supreme quest. Identity with the Reality, Identity with Sacchidanandam, identity with Siva is the spiritualist's Samadhi, the ultimate trance of self-in-Self.

Again, this kind of Saivism to which the Hindu mind submits with devotion has little in common with the Mediterranean adoration of the phallic. Again, the appearances of objective similarities become decep- tive. The Mediterranean phallic religions and cults, powerful in their appeal and practice, as we have noted, and shall note further on, were not quite unknown to the Indian and Hindu theological complex; but their spread failed miserably, and did not leave any remarkable impact on the age-old ancient spiritual content of Saivism. The Mäheśvara, Pasupata, Käpäla, Näkulin who pass as the Saiva sects have been denounced as hypo- crites and frauds (Pasandin: Palvacāra),119

Reality is Siva. Šiva is both static and dynamic because Sakti is Siva's aspect, an inherent (Tadatmya) property of Siva. In the expression of dynamism Sakti acts as a great oak acts its way out of the seed. Śakti's blows up itself to become'; and Sakti's Vimarsa expresses the universe. This is not to mean that Sakti without Śiva, or Siva without Sakti supplies the cause or the action to become. Both being together, the reservoir of dynamism and field, both together, get expressed, and none without the other could operate separately. The material and instrumental causes, here, unite in one and the same Šiva, or the Śiva-Sakti unit. Śiva is the form, and Sakti is the mirror-reflection; the Abhasa or the Bimba; she is the emerged ego, or 'I'.

Five Aspects of Siva

This is, therefore, the starting point of the Universal manifestation, or of the Prapanca. These constituents or components together are 'Siva-Sakti. All is Šiva. Nothing is out of it. The Universe being composed of these 'constants', remains constant, despite changes, integration, disintegration, metabolism, assimilation, decav and destruction. The constants, are also variants; and phenomenon-variants are constants; and thus the phenomena of (Srati) coming into being and going out of being (Pralaya) operate, again constantly, within the principles of non-variant- constant-variations. These variations of the constants within the constant are known as categories, or Tattvas of which, we have spoken elsewhere. These Tatteas in Kashmir Saivism number thirty-six.

We have already enumerated the five categories of expressions of Śiva. These, as we know, are: Limitation (Tirodhana), or the very functionalism of Siva within a limited form by giving up its assumed quality of limitlessness. Thus the first category is one of Expression within limits. Then comes the 'Being', or 'Creation (Srapi). This is the actual entry in the cycle of pro- creation. This calls for duration of the created 'being'. This is preserva- tion (Sthiti). The created after its due stay, starts disintegrating, and loses its form, which is destruction (Pralaya). The last function being over, the cycle continues, unless, as Siva's final expression descends as Grace (Anugraha), which leads to liberation from the cycle. Does Siva see the universe identical with himself?

Certainly not; because Śiva has no
Vimarsa. Since there is no Vimarsa, so there is no change, and no Ego. Naturally, then Siva does not see himself and the universe as "Two', or the 'feeler' and a 'felt. Śiva is devoid of such distinctive ego. Ego is Cit's function or Sakti's attribute. He is capable of Consciousness without feeling, 'I-ness', or independence; he is, of course, independent (Soatantra) without having the conscious feeling of such in- dependence. Active expressions of these must manifest through Sakti's attributes. Integral self-consciousness belongs to Siva only in the sense that it is also an expression of Power, Sakti. Since the Universe is Sakti's manifestation Prapanca, originally, we can say,

self-consciousness becomes static, and renders itself sterile of creative power; and Power becomes blind without awareness of Her being Consciousness itself. The situation is well-described as an ancient soul and a somnambulist force'. Sri Aurobindo describes the same in Savitri as "The Vision and the Boon".

Does not the Atom illustrate the point? Is it not both an awareness without power, and a power without sense? Is it not true that in the making of an atom selection is effected without will, expressed without choice? Is it then, not operative as expression of inertia, awareness, automatism and power? The relations between electrons could be under- stood only when regarded as a whole, and never as abstract individuals. Mere subjectivity fails to explain the total relationship that exists within the family group that moulds the atom. The same electron within and outside of a living body is a different individual. The characteristic properties (Gunas and Tattvas) are determined by the very complex structures and behaviour of the molecules. "Reality is not a collection of independent things, but a whole, and as such it has a structure which prescribes the relations as well as the properties of the parts." Some myste- rious inter-relations form within the family of the molecules which form an atom. These project to the physicist some inferential surmises; but the inter-relation of Siva and Sakti, and the different Tattvas, to the spiritualist's subjectivity, project a Realisation which transcends the physi- cal plane, and attains the knowledge of abstract Reality and its immediate inescapable concomitant-Truth.

Kashmir Šaivism calls 'Anutva', or the atomic-state of matter, as a limitation of Siva (Reality). After the Anutva, a secondary limitation caused by Maya brings Siva to what the Samkhya calls Purusa. (One has again to note that Maya in this context is not to be explained by what the West bluffs away by calling mere Illusion.) Šiva's omnipotence, eternity, all-pervasiveness have been limited in Puruşa, i.e., Siva gripped under Mayd-limitations, which act at the basis of the creating and created universe. Together with the idea of Ego, or 'T', or the Self-Conscious Cit, Siva, the integral Reality', watches Creation coming into being without any change in Siva, or without

Siva's getting created, or without Siva's having to create. A polarity of subject-object 'T' and 'It', (Ahamidam) emerges because of the self-imposed self-limitations of Siva. This dichotomy of subject-object is a stage in the process of enfoldment of the One into the many; and at the outset, is merely an idea. It does not, however, remain so, because the nature of manifestation urges it to come into being, and ultimately the material being with its five facets emerges. Sakti has had her full play. The two are so diverged as to appear as 'two' and distinct. Reality and its subjectivity of Oneness gets blurred by the facets, multiplicity and variety. Vimarga has blurred Cit.

Matter is essentially symbolic in character, and its processes are irreversible. That is why it is regarded as the mother of the Universe. Creativeness is not confined to the vital and psychological aspects, but matter also is creative change.... Existence is a continuous miracle (Of Srifi; Sthiti and Pralaya above). Physical science fails, if it attempts to transform a miracle into an equation. It describes the way in which bodies behave, and not why they do so. Our physical and chemical symbolism is a necessary working instrument which is exceedingly useful. But it is only a rough representation of Reality in one of its aspects. We may feel that we know all about matter, that its existence is undoubted, and that its nature is intelligible, but all that we know about it is the effect it produces on us (Notice how close is this use of the word Effect to the Abhdsandda's theory of Reflection). When we come to think of it, it reduces itself to certain feelings and relations. (Compare the theory of Spanda's vibrational responses) among them. It is experience, and possible experience."

-Radhakrishnan, An Idealist View of Life, p. 241.

(Parenthesised comments author's)

Suddha-Maya: Kancukas

This variety or multifariousness is caused by the activity of limitation known as Maya, which at this stage is called Asuddha-Maya. It is a shroud that hides Šiva's totality. This 'shroud' or Kancuka is again classified into five: Kala (Light in phases); Vidya

(Self-conscious awareness); Räga (Emotive traits); Kala (Time-bond); and Niyati (Destiny). Maya is the creatrix of subject-object difference; and because of Maya we get the Prakṛti and Puruşa concepts. These two through simultaneous activity bring creation into being. (These technical words used in Saiva- Siddhanta are being retained here in the context of the Tattvas in the Trika.)

How simple it is to symbolise empirically this Prakyti-Puruşa-concept as a male-female copulation, and then go on to ascribe eroticism or phallicism to the Hindu concept of Sina-Sakti. Yet how distant are these Siva-Sakti concepts, and the Saiva metaphysics, from the Greco-Oriental phallic cults. This illustrates again the dangers of over-simplification.

In bringing this creation into being Maya deals with the five Kancukas (sheaths), as well as the twenty-five categories (Tattvas) of Samkhya. Thus together with Mäyä, the Kancukas and the Samkhya-categories make up the 31 Tattvas of the finite empirical world of Matter.

Whilst absorbing this analysis one has to remember that the states of Siva and Puruşa are not the same. Purusa also known in Śaiva Siddhanta as Paju transcends into Śiva, and the difference is realised only through transcendental perception. Puruşa is Šiva immanent. Śiva, the Absolute, is transcendental. This process of transcendence has to avoid the five Kancukas of Ahuddha-Maya, and then to pass through Suddha (immaculate) Maya.

Suddha-Māyā

The five categories of Suddha-Maya together with the previous 'thirty- one' form the 'thirty-six' tattvas of the Kashmir system of Pratyabhijna. The five categories of Suddha-Maya are Suddha-Vidya or Sad-Vidya (as opposite to Avidya); Sakti and Siva. These together represent the union of Bodha (intelligent cognisance), and Satantrata (independence), men- tioned already. Mäyä differentiates between the Idea and the

Object, so that the Object always falls short of an idea. This is due to Avidyä, the shroud which is one of the Kancukas. Souls of the Conscious-self are bound by these

limitations, or bonds. Śiva being awareness, liberation from bonds means attainment of free awareness, which is Šivata. Mäyä, as the separating force, prevents souls to realise union. It prevents the realisation of Oneness. Soul is bounded by Maya; but not in Suddha-Maya, which renders the senses of 'I' and 'It' merge into a sameness. Suddha-Mäyä emphasises 'It' more; hides 'ego', and thereby reaches a kind of

Oneness

through ignoring, if not eliminating, the Ego-part of the self (as it happens in Love in the Bhakti-system). Suddha (Sat)-Vidya aids 'It' (my Beloved Krsna or Christ) to emerge, and 'I' to submerge. In Saivism the entire process is subjective and abstract. In Bhakti; too, it is subjective, but not abstract. It is emotionally motivated to eliminate the 'T' into the objective-Love of "Thou' or 'It'. (I love Siva, whatever I do is all but for Siva and Siva alone.) "In Sad-Vidyd or Suddha-Vidya, though 'T' and 'It' are not separate, still the 'It' is more prominent." Identity in spite of separateness is fact to be recognised in thought. We do so when we speak of the Man and the Head of the Man.

Išvara: Sadasiva

The two are one, yet not one, as is the case with the body, and the weight of the body. Isvara-Tattva is a progress from the previous state of prominence of one in suppression of the other. An eara-inspired soul hits a balance between the two, and considers the two making a complete whole. (Com- pare the Rädhä-Krsna, Hara-Gauri, or Ardha-närisvara, or the Mithuna concepts.)

Sadatica is a still higher stage where the soul rests at peace 'in' the subject. It is experiencing I's being 'something'. It experiences 'I am Siea', 'I am Brahma', etc. Experiencing subjectively signifies objec- tivity. When the wave realises its Ocean-ness, it is no longer bounden by its wave-ness, once it submits its individual form to the vastness of its cause for being. In the Isvara stage it was just at a state of equipoise; here is peace. This stage of Sadašina is important, basic, but passingly temporary, nominally existing only to pass off to the next stage. It is just like the artistic mental

sketch of a line or outline of the basic plan along which a future painting is going to take shape. As it clears up into something tangible and communicative object-sense, it owes its being to the Siva-Tattva. Sakti is the nursery for the seed to sprout. Siva's ideas find expressional rootings in Sakti. In the Sakti-field the Siva-seeds of subjectivity start becoming objective entities.

Ascension of 'I' to Samadhi

The five Sakti-Tattvas (Cit; Ananda; Iecha; Jnana; and Kriya) work from one to the other, the last being dominated gradually by the previous ones. Finally the pure subjectivity of Cit is reached where the primal stirrings of Siva emerge as pure conscious awareness of Self as Self. The Five Sakti categories are respectively influenced by the five Siva categories. Thus, as Cit is characterised by Siva's predominance, so Ananda is characterised by Sakti's Iecha by Sadativa's, Jhana by Tiara's, and lastly, Kriya is characterised by the predominance of Suddha-Vidya. Thus the absorption of the final Šiva-Tattva of the stirrings of Self- awareness within the Self without any objective dependence, the gradual elevation from the fifth and last Suddha-Vidya-Tattva of Kriya-Sakti (simple power to act) is a gradual process. The aspiring soul endeavours to absorb the objectivity of the world gradually and integrates the sense of duality into the pure subjectivity of Siva by stages of ascension. The Pratyabhijnd stage ascending to the pure Spanda stage is also a gradual ascension of the empirical knowledge to a transcendental spiritual knowledge. Again we note that in acquiring a perfect transcendental state of tranquil joy of Oneness the start has to be purely objective.,

Lila: The Cosmic Game

When an aspirant 'recognises' himself as Šiva, he passes through Abhasa and Pratyabhijnd to Spanda, and the stirrings end in perfect peace. This is sleep and awakening of Siva, which is the basis, the core, the root of the Universe. The journey of the empirical to the transcendental is called ascension; or, the dawning of the Siva-sense of the Siva identity; or, the final Identity of Siva and I. This ascension could only

take effect with the descension of Siva's Grace. Šiva descends on the Self, and a sense of identity dawns.

If this is so, why then all this effort on poor Śiva's part? Why this playful swing of ascension and descension if the emerged universe has ultimately to be identified? The spiritualist knows. He answers from his experience and says, "The Lord thus plays with Himself." The Power that be, irresistibly remains in Force as Power, and has to play for its own sake. Such is the inherence of the nature of Siva. He imposes on Himself His limitations. The spider making and unmaking his web; the infant in the cradle playing with his own hand: the cat trying to chase her own tail; the spider-monkey engaged perpetually in looping and unlooping-how engagingly absorbed are these in their own games! Such is the Game, the Playfulness (the Lhadini-Sakti's innate and irrepres sible expressionism); the Cosmic-Lila of Śiva.

The Concept of Original Sin in Trika

Šiva manifests Himself through Sakti. He becomes through Sakti and her limitations, the knower, the knowable and the means of know- ledge. These three emerge from one, and go back to the one.

All that emerges gathers the deliberate limitations, or bondage, which work as the inherent set-backs, or impurities (Mala), or drags against a free progress towards Realisation. We have noted these, as sheaths, or obstructions (Kancukas) for recognising the ultimate identity. The five sheaths (Kancukas) already spoken of are burdened with the drags inherent in the selective operation before an atom (Anu) is formed; these 'drags', Kancukas are referred to as Anava-Mala, or the inherent impurities in atomisation. Then alone the drag created by the communicating urge of adherence between objects that reflect or react as like or dislike becomes operative, and gradually develops as Anava-Mala, and Kaneuka. This kind of selectiveness create separatism, and acts as deterrents to purity of thought and purity of conception. This, as the original 'sin', the original atomic defect, acts against soul's progress towards

Realisation. It spreads totally, from subjective ideas to the universal phenomenon; from the world of the Abstract and Subjective, to the world of Matter and Objective. It is the Maya-Mala, the drag of impurity inherent in adhe- sion (of atoms into a material fact), and communication from matter to matter, mind to matter, or mind to mind. According to the Trika, thus, even mind and mental faculties, and their mutual operations are atomic. The third Mala is the Karma-Mala, i.e., adherence to impurities inherent in getting involved in action's cycle. All participations are Atomic, and are subjects to Karma-Mala. Because of this subjective Atomic activity Purusa, the Actor, acquires the special power of ethical selectiveness, i.e., distinguishing bad from good, and perfect from imperfect. In making this selection, It has no choice. In making a

'choice' to distinguish, Purusa has no choice. In operating It's will Puruşa has no will. Thus the five Kancukas are the five shrouds that make a full union impossible and the three Malas affect Matter and Material Body from the subjective thinking to experiencing objective achievements. The world of Life's action thus becomes shrouded in eternal mystery, and is harassed by such pitfalls as remain beyond explanations, which in human language we ward off by the use of such terms as 'accident', 'destiny', 'fate', and 'luck'.

The Soul which suffers from Anava-Mala alone, and remains free of other two Malas, is called Vijnana-Kald. Whereas Vijnana-Kala is free from the 'two' Malas, Anava-Mala and Karma-Mala, Pralaya-Kala is free from only one Karma-Mala. Where the three Malas operate, the Jiva or Soul is a Sakala. This is the last and the least of the Kald-s. But when the universe disintegrates into the great chaos again and Pralaya becomes Maha-Pralaya, all attributes, all Tattwas get absorbed in Maya which still would have functions left for her.

Sin and Grace: Sakti-Pata

Finding it hard to follow? Perhaps. But without a Guru it is bound to be so. The book says this again and again. Our ignorance prevents us to acquire the necessary poise to understand such an analysis of the empirical universe. This ignorance is inherent in our

very being. The Trika warns against this catastrophe. It is Anava, or atomic. The Anava- Mala limits the individual; and he suffers from ignorance, which has two forms: Paurasa-ignorance, and Bouddha-ignorance. Paurusa-ignorance concerns the Puruşa or the very Being. It regards the self as non-self, and causes thereby an imbalance in comprehending the true order of things. Without Siva's Grace (Anugraha) this innate ignorance cannot be removed. Šiva's Anugraha is known as Sakti-Pata. (The power that descends on the Realiser's consciousness.)

The Siva system, therefore, discusses the theory of Original Sin in a methodical way, and welcomes the element of Grace subjectively. Such descent of Grace helps the removal of bonds (Pala-Kaya), restoration of the original purity, and, finally, attainment of the Immaculate Conception (Šivatva-Yojana). This is 'to Realise'; and calls for intelligence or Buddhi. Hence the two defects which get removed by Grace- are Pauruşa (Atomic) and Bauddha (Intelligent): that is to say the first defects to be removed are constitutional defects inherent in the very essence of the matter which shaped the body of the individual; and the second defects are those of consciousness which by nature seek classification and enlightenment, but are disturbed by lack of proper and controlled mental balances. 'Grace' could ignore these middle states, and pierce through all strata, and lead to the Immaculate Identity. The great luck of obtaining direct Grace, and being 'pierced' by the sharp rain of Grace (Drdha-Sakti-Nipata- Viddha) as a fact in transcendental meditation is extremely difficult. Those who achieve such direct contact, are regarded as the Messiahs and the Avataras, super-Yogis, to whom Yoga comes as swimming to fish, or to ducklings.

In connection with the topic on Bhakti we have elaborately dealt with this aspect of Krpa or Karuna or Grace. Since this aspect of Grace, much like 'the quality of mercy...', 'droppeth, as the gentle rain from the heavens upon the place beneath', it has been often equated with the blossoming of Love. Spiritual Love seeks the union of Spirits. The seeker of Love strives and approaches, prepares and expects; the response comes as a blessing, a gift, a reciprocation that more than equalises; it absorbs and

assimilates. This is the reason why the seeker is imaged as the feminine part of spirit; and the reciprocator is imaged as the mascu- line part.

From the earliest times this Male-Female image in spiritual aspiration has been symbolised in legends, forms, songs and poems. Radha and Kra' in spirit is just one of the hundred ways in which 'Grace as Love' has been expressed. St. Paul expressed the same as 'psyche and pneuma'.

The mystic idea of 'alter-ego' evolves out of this very concept. Lao Tzu

says:

The valley spirit never dies

It is called the Mysterious Female..

Readers of the Song of Songs, or those of the Rasa-Pancadhyaya or of the Gita-Govindam are fully aware of this mysticism that pervades the area of Grace as the Dawn's awakening through a misty, foggy night's haze. Allegory becomes a natural expression for conveying such tender, delicate, incandescence as the perfumed experience of spiritual Grace conveys. It is, however, remarkable that saints who claim transcendental union, and describe it, at times in detail, when female, imagine the

corresponding power as male; and when male, vice versa. The recipients of Grace image the source of Grace in contradistinction of his or her own personality. This is the expression of the emotionally vibrant language of Love or Bhakti. The Siva-Grace or Sakti-Nipata has to transcend the personal sense of distinction and thrill in the sense of Oneness, not union. This is the reason why the Siddhantin of the Agamas sing of Siva and Sakti in a consorted unity, and not in a union. The difference, though subtle, is very real, and distinguishes the Siddhantin (Bhakti) from the Trika (Spanda).

Grace has often been confused with the awakening of consciousness to its fullest effulgence. This psychological approach to analyse the personal self does not reveal a full picture however. A feeling of biological contentment in the immediate and

mechanical relationship of the body with the outer world could be termed as grace as manifest in the animal strata of the self. This animal grace is common in the animal world.

This is not the case with the self's relationship with the social sur- roundings, where one is subject to the interplay of relationships emerging out of behaviour patterns. The child's relationship in and around the cradle and nursery, expands into the world of friends. This friendship evolves into a very close personal relationship as man and woman, often termed as Love. But it is remarkable that one of these relationships bestows that fullness of contentment which the soul seeks through Grace. It is remarkable that a lack of satiety haunts all forms of love except the spiritual.

So with Human Grace. But, also, being mortal, in the mortal world, the fate of all human Grace is found to be limited. In human body the soul remains unfulfilled.

(a) Rain on the windows, creaking doors,

And the blasts that besem the green,

I'm here and you are there,

And a hundred miles between.

or,

(b) I searched for him but I found him not;

(e) Our sincerest laughter with some pain in frought;

or,

(d) Kanthaileşah pranayini-jane kimpuna-r-darasamsthe.

(With the arms of the Beloved thrown around,

The Heart yet longs for something else);

(e) Reva rodasi vetasi tarutale cetah samut-kanthate. (The Reva murmurs in suppressed anguish, and flows through the reed-beds; and my soul longs for the unknown.)

Human tongue abounds in similar expressions in all languages of the world. They all picture the same inadequacy of human love reaching the 'unbodied joy'.

On the spiritual plane the only human relationship that fills the most is that which exists between the Guru and the disciple, where, most of the communication, if not all, relates to a spiritual plane. This very relationship has been idealised in religions as one existing between the spiritual preceptor and the novice; between the images and worshippers. In a previous reference to Guru in this chapter insistence has been already laid on the great importance of a Guru in the spiritual life. The basic reason why a Guru must hold the key to spiritual success, is this funda- mental relationship that Grace demands between two persons bounded in a deep understanding as spiritual as love.

To accept a saint, an Avatara, an image, a symbol as the pinnacle of spiritual contentment is the highest that Grace could achieve in the human plane. In very rare cases, however nothing at all is required for deserving this Grace, except worthiness.

Ramakrishna Paramhamsa effected such a relation with his Mother- goddess Kali; Mira Bäi and Śri Caitanya did the same with Krsna; or Jnanadeva with Viththala of Pandharpur; Theresa, St. John on the Cross and Catherine with Jesus. Love is the supreme bond between Man and God.

But, this stage too exceeds itself, and eliminates the last traces of ego even as the receiver. Complete dedication follows. "The desire to give, the gift, the flames in which the gift is offered, the giver, the goal where the gift is to reach, as well as the object of the fullness of dedication to and for the One are in effect all compact. Such an 'All-to-All' desire, indeed, must close up the area of consciousness of the self, and pin- point it to a single purpose from objects and objectives around. But this does not

mean that such pointed attention closes the mind to things and events around. The objective of spiritual liberation is not selfish possessiveness. On the contrary, it opens up the world around in their fullness of meaning, purpose and limitations, and tunes up the inner self to keep ready to receive all reactions within the limitations of the chang- ing world. Detachment of the spirit is not to be confused with the cynical disregard of values. That Spiritual Grace which all Yogis seek is never sought for a selfish purpose. It is always sought for the good of the world around. The highest achievement of enlightened self-consciousness lies in the field of service to man. Thus the spiritually awakened finds himself involved both in the animal and the Human world; and in the descension of Grace on his spirit, he finds himself in possession of the one light, by the help of which he could remove human confusion and human suffering. Spiritual Grace could be ignored by none, not even by the materialistic philosophers. As long as man finds himself involved in happiness, contentment and grief, man is involved in Grace and Spiritual Awakening.

St. John on the Cross says, "All our goodness is a loan." The Source is God. "God works; and his work is God." Gitä says, "Even (yogis like) Janaka and others achieved liberation through involvement in work, action."

Grace is direct. Grace depends on absolute sincerity, and completest dedication. To be sincere one needs something to be sincere to. Supreme spirit to be dedicated may
better be acknowledged. When ack- nowledged, this is Siva. Once this spirit of dedication to Siva is complete and unhesitatingly final, Grace descends. It descends to the poorest, meanest, the least learned, the unlettered, the unguided. Pages and pages
of pedantry, casuistry, logic and debate, forms and forms of ritualistic hazards, penances, fasts and pilgrimages, prove as mere chaff before this sincerity as illustrated in the spiritual lives of Dhruva, Närada, Sudāmā, Rumi, Al Gazali, Ramakrishna. In Saivism, and in the final analysis, in dedication to Siva, this emphasis on Grace elevates it above the Vedic rigours and forms, the Brahmanical ritualisms, and above the debates of the learned, as above castes and privileges, 123

It is the element of Grace that welcomes to Saivism the vast human world of the deprived. the unlettered, the exploited and the excluded. Spiritual contentment is the birthright of all; and is not the special privilege of the learned, the heroic or the moneyed alone. Those who worshipped within the temple of Borobudur or Angkor Vat might have their spiritual delight; but no less was the value of the delight of those spiritual artists, artisans and masons who had created over the centuries those mammoth temples. They were no doubt exploited, for human glorification of a class of people; yet whilst they created they also derived a taste of Beauty and Grace, without which no art senses finality. Saivism, by introducing the element of Grace, cuts through the vast forestry of Brahmanical casuistry based on rites, books, learnings, knowledge and privileges. But not so the Guru. The Guru could not be ignored. His assistance holds good and fast all the time. On the spiritual path the Guru is a must.

Grace and Union

But to confuse this Realisation, attainable through Grace, with transcendental Identity, would be erroneous. To have the essence is not to be the flower. To have Sirata is not to be Siva. To be moon-lit is not to be the Moon. For the ultimate Union Sakti alone is helpful. Even Siva's help is to descend through Sakti-Nipäta. It needs removal of the original sin of atomic impurity; and the impurities are removed by the stirrings that Sakti induces. As Sakti helps, the soul-Atman, Jiva, the Essence becomes free of the last impurity, and attains the title to a full Union. Now, when this state prevails, it is called in relation to him, who experiences it, Extinction; nay, Extinction of Extinction, for the soul has become extinct to itself, extinct to its own extinction; for it becomes unconscious of itself and unconscious of its own unconsciousness. Were it conscious of its own unconsciousness, it would be conscious of itself. In relation to the man, immersed in this state, the state is called, in the language of metaphor, 'Identity'; in the language of reality 'Unification',114

In the Tibetan Mahayana and Vajrayana Tantric images such actively inspired couples represent the thrill of union, even as the hundred heads and the thousand arms of the

encoupled figures, with the universal weapons, appear to roll about; even as the lotus of full knowledge, and the heavenly light of full illumination appear to be keeping the couple afloat. The Jivas coupled in the cosmic union (where each becomes One) of the subjective opposites, even whilst lolling within the world of many forms and passions, are capable of attaining a thrill where all thrills and stirrings come to a transcending tranquil state. It is more than peace; more than poise; more than void; and more than a pass-out. It is cosmic Bliss, Sat-Cit-Anandam; it is Siva. "I live; yet not I; but Christ liveth in me," said St. Paul.

The personal soul is but a descension from Siva to the sphere of Akuddha-Maya (the world of fascination). This soul wants to be worldly. Having lost its subjectivity this descended personal soul, the Jiva, is considering its object form as 'I', and imputes to the object a subjectivity which is neither full, nor accurate. This is due to Maya (the bonds that tie up knowledge). In this state too the Jiva, according to Trika, functions within the five primal and eternal bondages (conceal-ment, creation, preservation, dissolution and grace). Without these, the bonds, the retrieving of the way back to Siva, would be rendered difficult. Even as bonds, the bonds are aids. Even the much condemned human body and human life and human passions are helpful to the spiritualists. Jiva and Mäyä together assist each other in reaching Realisation. To attain Siva-hood the Jiva, or soul, must realise the nature of 'I'-ness without falling into the trap of Egoism. The emphasis to know 'thy-Self' is not an empty adage. To be selfish is not to be the Self-known person. Maya binds the former; Sakti releases the latter.

Guru and the Knowledge of Yamala

Such knowledge of geting rid of Maya, and seeking shelter of Sakti comes from initiation of Diksa (Spiritual initiation like Baptism, but of a far more personal and involved nature). Diksa has to come from a Guru; and the meeting with a Personal Guru is in itself an act of Siva's Grace, a result of Sakti-Nipata. The Parnahanta, one with a sense of total I-ness, and with the gift of the resultant bliss, is a product of Diksä. Without Guru, without Diksä, this bliss shall remain unattained. The role of a

Guru becomes thus an all-important question for the Sadhaka, devotee. This realisation is the first step towards cleansing the original sin (Anava-Mala). The Soul gets beyond his intelligent self, and liberates itself from both Pauruşa and Bauddha knowledge of the Self, and attains liberation whilst alive (Juan-Mukti). The Jivan-Mukta (Liberated in physical life) is a person of spiritual Realisation. He has known of the spirit from the spirit, of Siva from Sakti, and of Sakti from Siva, so that he is Šiva's Own, as Sakti is. This is the knowledge of the two in One and One in two, the knowledge of Tamala or copulation', or coupling the two as one, and one as two.

To cast an overtone of eroticism in this spiritual knowledge depends on a deliberate skill of interpretation, from which even the Hindu esoteric science and spiritual observations have not been entirely spared. From age to age, and from people to people, much of the carnal practices, even in temple organisations, the spiritual and esoteric rites have been allowed to get degenerated to the glee and for the erotic consummation of the pervert characters, the ogres and the rascals. What night-clubs have done to the fine-arts, what prostitution has done to love, has been done to

the

Saivic way of thinking by empiricists, sophists and quacks, specially by the sick psychiatrics obsessed with erotic images and carnal desires. On the other end knavish spirits of darkness, for continuing their lustful malpractices, have been using religion and religious forms as convenient covers to justify their acts, and to mesmerise and delude the helpless credulous and the feeble-minded victims.

Dawning of Grace and attainment of Śivată has to be enjoyed. For this the Jiva has to adopt various means. Jiva has achieved; does the Jiva know the art of its full use yet? To get married is not to ensure a fully purposive marital happiness. The essence of Divinity is indicative of the Divine presence, but for the realisation of its full potentiality further attempts are required. Becoming Śiva is possible only when the last particle of impurity is removed. The full knowledge of Reality is only possible when

Jiva fully achieves the likeness of Śiva (cf., Samkara's Hymn on 'I am Siva'.) As long as the least sense of 'I' or subjecthood is present, attaining to a likeness of Siva is impossible. Asuddha-Mäyä causes the subjecthood to remain adamant, and prevent further advance. It has been said that I-ness and selfishness are not the same, as subjectivity and egoism are not. As long as the sense of 'that' (Idamta) is present, the sense of 'I' (Ahamta) is also present. Ahamkära or egoism is produced by Maya. Ahamta or 'subjecthood' is free from Mäyä. Mäyä creates the sense of 'that' (Idam) as different from 'I' (Aham).

Bauddha Jñana and Paurusa Jñana

This confusion is set at nought by a day-to-day guidance, intimate care and personal interest, as could be bestowed only by a Guru, and it becomes, thus, essential to be initiated by him. The aim is to realise the ecstasy of the Parnahanta, the complete subjecthood free from all attach- ments or defilements: freedom from the least material duality. Thus dawns the pure Pauruça-Jnana, which has cut through the entanglements of Bauddha-Jnana. Bauddha Jnana is often confused as intellectual know- ledge, or book-knowledge. This is better described by the term Bauddha- A-jñāna. Bauddha-A-jñana springs from a claim to knowledge because of collected informations from books, and scriptures. Such storehouses lead to pedantry. Pedants are subject to learned-foolishness.

As distinct from the pedants there are intelligent scholars whose know- ledge is more perceptive, and acquires more depth. Although these too hold scriptural tradition as of high value, actually they attach much greater importance to mental discipline and deeper understanding. This latter form of matured book-knowledge of Bauddha Jñana alone removes Bauddha A-jñana. Such a process leads to 'liberation in lifetime', or Jivan-mukti. The soul, like the fowler in the Sivaratri legend (see Gloss.), has cut through the deep forest-growths, and passed through the opaque nightly darkness of Bauddha-Jnana into the open, free light of Pauruça-Jnäna.

This liberation-in-life (Joan-mukti) helps the soul to attain a state of perfect equilibrium and peace. Knowledge is identified with experience;

joy with creation; ideal with action. Realisation of the perfect and sup- reme delight of spiritual identity in its fullness is Parama Sivata, fullness of the two becoming one. Sakti and Siva become One; togetherness or Tamala has been attained (Expression), Prakdia and Vimarça (Depression) are poised in balance. This leads to the mastery over Sakti-Cakra (The cycle of Energy). Spiritual knowledge gradually advances towards consummation; and in between the start and the finish, grade by grade, in phases Sakti-modes attain development, until the same Sakti in its fullness exhilarates and thrills in the ecstasy of consummation. Each step forward is Šakti in a special mode. In this way atomic impurity loses much of its perceptible taints; but its total elimination is yet to be. These impurities impel as Samskara from stage to stage.

Upaya-Anupaya

The Goal is yet to be attained. There are four 'means' (Upayas). The Trika-Saivism of Kashmir gives the highest honour to the realiser who reaches the coveted goal without having to take recourse to any 'means' whatsoever. This is quite possible and fits in with the sublime theory of the Descent of Grace (Šakti-Nipäta), which has been already discussed. The ever-compassionate Sakti chooses its fitting subject; and the objective of attainment is bestowed as a matter of simple Grace. This needs no 'Upaya' (means), and is known as Anupaya (non-means) or Anandopaya (the Blissful means). Śakti's Grace is just enough for a thorough cleansing of all types of impurities (Malas). No special effort no book-learning, no rigours, no practice is called for; only the Guru's simple guidance; and then, Grace descends from Sakti like rains from heaven, like the 'fall of the immortal. nectar from the bloom of the thousand petalled lotus'. The transcendent nature of the Soul is recognised in its full glory, and the integral 'I' pervades the world where nothing but the same 'I'-ness prevails.

But those who are not so placed as to deserve this Anupaya descension of Grace, must find other means (Upaya). For them Guru and Diksä (Initiation from preceptor) become an unavoidable process. Neither plurality, nor multiplicity, nor variety is the inherent attribute of Siva. The multitudinous exuberance of creation belongs to Sakti. Siva-concept is ultimate, integral, absolute and total. Šiva transcends even the idea of unifying the many into One. Šiva is away, above and disaffected by the distinguishing ideas of 'this' and 'that': Siva has no 'alternative' (Vikalpa), and is Nirvikalpa (the Only, without an alternative). He is Parama-Siva. The knowledge regarding this Nirvikalpa-Siva is attained through the Guru. (1) Guru is the first means. A Guru, firstly, administers Dikṣā, as Visvamitra to Räma, John to Jesus, Totapuri to Ramakrishna. He undertakes to initiate after studying the requirements, aptitude and capacity of the initiate seeker. (2) Thus Diksa becomes the second means. (3) Saktopaya is third means. It is a positive approach. We have mentioned about the Vikalpa (alternative) in the previous paragraph. Each Vikalpa is a conceptually determined entity, as different from another. To attain to the Nirvikalpa stage from this stage one has to proceed carefully and logically along the path of illumination, and not elimination. The Gita in the 18th chapter has clearly warned against the path of crude renunciation or elimination. The path of spirit does not cross the wilds of rigorous repression and abstensions. Illumination and understanding through expert guidance and determined self-application alone is of help. To understand is to be on the path of attainment. The positive approach is the ultimate real approach. Simplicity of mind has been imaged in a naked child's naked smile. Freedom from complexes is essential for spiritual enlightenment.

Doubt and Faith (Sattarka: Samvid)

This enlightenment through understanding depends on three factors. (1) Intuition in the most liberated form. It points correctly towards a choice in a case of alternatives. It correctly guides in a state of discrimina- tion. Because of this ability of correct selection (Sattarka) the process of understanding could be assisted by a natural ability

of grasping without the hindrance of cynical gloom, or of counteracting doubts. The ability of correct choice develops faith in the self. Confidence accelerates progress, and plants the roots of faith. Knowledge is attainable to the 'faithful' alone. Failing in faith, one remains a victim of the swaying influences of senses. To control the senses a rigorous course of discipline has to be undertaken. To the disciplined alone the senses remain controlled. All this becomes quite unnecessary for a man of faith. Faith gives confi- dence, and confidence leads to correct knowledge and realisation. Such knowledge frees from doubts. Doubts act as germs for a split-minded dual personality. Freedom from split-mindedness alone leads to the sobriety of poise, and to the tranquillity of finality. "The ignorant, the cynic, the doubtful and suspicious destroy their own selves. Such are smitten by their inner conscience; neither in this nor in any other life Gità calls such faith Sraddha: and the could they claim 'I am happy'."5 lack of it Sambaya; and suggests the former to be the door to 'heaven', and the latter to be the door to 'hell'. The split-personality lives a hell in life.

This enlightenment through Sattarka (correct choice) comes through the guidance of the Sad-Guru, the perfect preceptor. Through his guidance the knowledge of the traditional scriptures (Agamas) become familiar, and the world of conceptual determination dissolves gradually into the simplicity of the singleness of the Real. Sattarka has been described in the Trika philosophy as the 'gateway to the joy-fountain of absolute Apprehension (Nirvikalpa-Paramarasa-Torana) free from determinal con- cepts. The eight steps suggested by Patanjali in his Yoga system by themselves are not enough, according to Trika, for attainment of the full apprehension (Samid). Samvid metaphysically is referred to the aware- ness in consciousness which functions, according to Patanjali, through the body-mechanism, the vital-breath of Prana and Buddhi, the intelligent power of comprehension. Patanjali through Yoga attempts to discipline these for attaining Samvid. But Trika brushes aside these rigours, and claims Samrid to be the only Reality where knowledge, the known, and the knower cease to be different identities. Samoid by nature is One, Real and Nimikalpa. Samrid is spontaneous liberation. By denying intuitively its own nature it attains its independent

and final fullness. Not Yoga, but Sattarka causes it directly through the intuitive capacity of Life. Sattarka which refers to the innate intuition in man has to be refined, polished and activised through sacrifice or social deduction through self- denial (Tydga), oblations offered through the medium of fire (Homa), penances and vows (Vrata), repeating constantly a given meanful seed- sound conveying a purposive idea (Japa) and keep attention steadily fixed, and lastly disciplining all habits and senses (Yoga).126

But Sattarka or intuition is not just a wishful entity. There are categories of men in whom even Sattarka awaits some effort or practice that prepares. Such personal efforts are dependent on self-confidence and efforts (Puruşakāra), and await discipline. Patanjali prescribes his 'eight' means (Arfanga-Anava-Upaya), which enjoin personal efforts too as one of the means, and which are processed through four forms

dependent
on three instrumental means for keeping the body and mind in shape.
Four-Upayas

The first of these four processes (similar to Patanjali) is Dhyana or meditation. Of course, the heart is the seat of meditation where the knower, the means of knowledge and the knowables are all dissolved into the consciousness of the knower. This in reality would mean an absorption of the universal-self in the personal-self. The transcendental awareness of the Oneness gradually developes into a sense of 'allness'; and pure consciousness floats in absolute oneness. 'Beyondness' ceases. Apex, vertex and space all become one. The Space, the Time, the Dimensions all fade away in the pervasive awareness of 'T' or 'It'; ie, the awareness of One, silent, thrilling Joy without expression. Directions and continuity become 'that in itself. It is Anuttara.

All manifestations cease into a Siva-feeling; and from this very state alone manifestations could logically evolve. The state is Sivata; the realiser's state is Siva-state. Re-manifestations, as processes, are quite mysterious. Šiva, the pleasant one (Kalyana-murti), or Siva, the annihilator (Antaka-můrti), to him appear as ends of the

same truth. These opposites no longer inspire mystery, or terror, or duality in him. Like the swing of the two-faced hand-drum (Damara) in Siva's hand, he considers the processes as those which make Siva what He is, the only Reality.

The second means (Upaya) is Uccara. It is the control and direction of the vital breath Prana. Control of Prana or Pranayama assists in conservation of vital powers of the body independently of extraneous aids and assistance. By reserving an abundance of the vital power independent of external aids, consciousness becomes free to meditate for long hours without submitting the body-machine to mechanical reflexes that the body as a machine requires man to respond to. The aim and utility of this meditation, of course, is Samvid (Transcendental Awareness), the final goal already referred to.

The third means (Upaya) is Varna, which involves the practice of the subtle-vital-breath or the Sukama-Prana, which permeates the body and beyond the body, the atmosphere. Varna is the control of these subtle- Pranas which subsist, and can subsist without bodies. As a means of (Dhyana) meditation and (Sadhana) practice, these vital forces have to be taken care of. While Uccara is being practised, a kind of sound (Dhani) becomes cognisable; this leads to Varna, a special soul shaping into a special form. This congealed sound-form obtained through Dhyana is, to the Sadhaka specially and personally 'his'. This one is 'his' seed-word, the Bija, which to him communicates his abstract subject, his God, 'his Siva', his 'One'. It is he who has created this. It 'speaks' to him-the Bija must fit in with an aspirant's meditation. The seed-word for the aspirant is a storehouse of Power. It is his last and ultimate means. These Bija-s have been referred to as the Garland of Letters in Tantra. These Beja-s depend on Dhani (sound), and Dhvani congeals into the alphabetic Varna-form, and alphabets congeal into a special pronunciation (Uccara). But esoterically all these depend on purification of the self through Sadhana. The repetition of Bija leads to Samvid.

These have been the Means or Upaya-s in Trika. By following these, even the most helpless and ignorant aspirant could set himself on the right path, and ultimately

become a conqueror of Samrid. Siva is there, all the time, unbrokenly. The fact is that the individual is not aware; he is not alert. He, as it were, has broken the links of communication. He has been so much used to the state of broken links that he accepts this to be the natural state, and forgets that he is in Siva. Apprehension of Sina is no longer his. "When the much desired attention falls on the apprehension of the Self, which is no other than Siva, there is Pratyabhijña, or recognition of the fact that 'I am everything, and simul- taneously transcendent of everything, that is, nothing in particular, and yet all things together',127

C. Vira Saivism

We had occasion to refer to Vasava, the Prince-Brahmin leader of the South of India, who had brought about a revolutionary change or attempted to bring one about, through the sublime teachings of Saivism, and what in reality it meant to convey.

There exists within the folds of practising Saivism some of those austere but human traits, which, but for the teachings of Jesus (not what the present Christian Church practises), no other religious system offers. Yes, Buddhism too had reached for that noble passion of mass-, good in terms of both spiritual and material growth and fairplay. But the solid self-interest of both political and priestly leaderships successfully wiped out these noble attempts, and brought back the society to the bar-baric self-hunting for accumulation of Power and Wealth, using all the time the mass as fodder for the monster of War, which was a very popular practice amongst the power-hunters and wealth-seekers.

By the middle of the 12th century of our time Vasava had become convinced of the potential power underlying the sincere practice of Saivism. It was through his teachings that those who were dispossessed of the rights of entering the society as Men, the temple as Devotees, the marketplace as equals were made to regard the body itself as a temple, and the In-dweller of the Body as the Supreme Lord of all. Śiva and His Consort, the Mother-Power are aboded within the temple-body as the Soul and the

Mind. To remind constantly how true and perma- nent, how immovable and solid was this confirmed conviction, he had ordained to bear the insignia (Lingam) of unalterable Firmness (Sthanu, Mrda) on their body. (Much has been written in the Western world about these stone-form-bearing sects of the South as devotees who bear the sign. of the phallus on their body.) The Western criticism of this sect offers one of those typical instances of mis-readings, which, instead of fulfilling the divine task of bringing men together has spread more and more conflicts and misunderstandings. The fact is that throughout the Western world, specially in the Mediterranean societies, eversince the Priapic-age, the custom of wearing the Phallus as a talisman prevails; and this causes the Western religious-observer to pronounce upon the sublime intentions of Vasava with roughness characteristic of their missionary zeal demonstrated in the countries of the Northern Mediterranean and Egypt.

Sivanubhava Mantapa has been a monumental creation of Vasava. This was an institution he had organised under the leadership of a great saint, Allama Prabhu. It was at this institution that he had organised those very reforms which were considered to be unorthodox, revolutionary and downright attacks on the Brahmanically dominated society, for which his life was forfeit, his honour was calumniated and his followers were often barricaded, barracked, harassed, condemned and pilloried. In spite of all this he not only was followed by the mass, but his reforms and spiritual leadership successfully left for the Hindu heritage a number of celebrated saints, quite a few of whom have been women, with Akka Mahadev leading them all. The treasure house of the Vacana literature of Kanada is a proud bequest left by the Jangamas (Jangama -mobile matter), as the followers of Vasava were generally called, because of their belief that the human body is a moving temple of the Lord, and must be maintained and regarded as such, and consequently kept in a perpetual state of purity
and sublimity.

Its canonical dogmas depend upon what has been called as Pañcācāra (the Five rituals), and Astävarana (the eight-fold shields) to protect the house of the Lord, i.e., the Body. These are:

1. Lingacara -Daily worship of the Siva-Lingam.

2. Sadacăra- -Good conduct towards all men, but particularly towards the members of its own sect. It enjoined on all its members the ethical and material tenets of what Socialism in practice contains.

3. Sivacāra--enjoins on its members intercommunal dining and intercommunal marriage irrespective of caste dis-tinctions.

4. Brtvacāra -It enjoins the subtlest tones of humility towards all ani- mals and men as if men were duty bound, as servants are towards other animals, and Life.

5. Ganacara-Enjoins the entire Community to rise up en-masse to rebutt, refute and, if necessary, retaliate any unfounded adverse criticism or attack on the tenets and practices of the community.

The Aftavarada, or the Eight-Ornaments are as follows:

1. The Guru is the first protector as the spiritual Leader.

2. Linga -Then comes the constancy with which one should regard the Lingam on the body and in the Mind. This constancy, to regard the body as the holy of the holies, the Abode of the Lord is held very dear to the sect

3. Jangama -A firm knowledge of the metaphysics of the principle of Dynamism underlying all Divine feeling; for nothing Divine could be still; stillness being contrary to the Divine Will These first three, could not be followed by the devotee in parts; but to be successful, one has to devote oneself to one and all of them with concurrent submission.

4. Padodaka-is a protection against all pride and vanity, because this could be the washings of the Lingam, or the feet of the Guru. It should be sipped.

5. Prasada -or the food offered to the Lord or to the Guru. No food must be taken without first being offered to the Guru or to the Lord.

6. Bhasma- is the Ath left over from the fire-sacrifice. This should always besmear the forehead, at least, if the whole body could not be covered by it, as a reminder that the Body is actually nothing but a handful of dust and ash.

7. Rudrakya- the seed has to be borne in the form of a bead-garland, rosary, for chanting (see Gloss.),

8. Mantra -the chant itself is Namah Sivaya the great Five-vowelled Mantra.

I

Mind and the Phenomenal World

In the phenomenal world man finds himself only as a part. His faculty of perception alone establishes his awareness of the immediate environs, from which his mental awareness projects only to be aware of, the world and things beyond his immediate environs. Thus his knowledge of the world is a composite result of immediate perception in inferential conception.

It is the nature of human mind to relate the immediate perception to some abstract cause, and expect from the cause different abstract possibilities. Of course, such an impulse to pursue the immediate, does not come to everyone, and at all time. Mind has to gain a certain deve- lopment to be capable of comprehending both the question and the answer. Philosophy results from such attempts by a developed mind, answering, or attempting to answer, these questions. As the perceptive world un- folds its mysteries, philosophy gathers meaning: and mind pursues a philosophical course. The gradual discovery of the reaches of the human mind and its aspirations form substantially the content of psychology.

The phenomenal world has to be known. Who knows? Of course, the mind knows. The knower' being the mind, the 'to-be-known' being the phenomenal world, that is, the subject being the mind, and the object being the perceptive experience, the question now arises, what is the nature of knowledge? At what stage and how the unknowing knows? That which knew not, knew. Of course, this is a change of state. When precisely does this change occur? What causes the change, and how?

The Process of Knowing

With Vasava this was the main problem, the discovery of the psycholo- gical process of 'knowing'. He was not so much engaged about the cos- mological principle underlying the nature of the Ultimate Reality. If the process of knowing is once discovered, once the strictly accurate moment of knowing is grasped, he thought, he would be able to grasp accurately what has to come. Hence his insistence on the psychological approach. He for the first time engaged his mind in investigating the principle of 'Knowledge' rather than the principle of 'Being'.

Recognition

Man depends on his consciousness for being aware of the objects. Man is essentially a conscious being. As he becomes self-conscious, before he became conscious of an object outside his self, he undergoes a change from self-consciousness to consciousness towards some object other than his self. (See Patanjali: Yoga-Sútra: Kaivalya-Päda.) The awareness of this 'otherness' itself causes a change in consciousness. He, from absolute 'self', becomes relatively conscious. He relates the knower to the known by becoming aware of a change in the nature of his con- sciousness. Human experience, according to this analysis, therefore, is not merely a psychological change it is more than that; it is more than merely being an event in itself; it promotes a volitional phenomenon known as recognition. He recognises as a result of the psychological awareness of a conscious change from a self-conscious state.

Sublimation of Recognition

Apprehension of an object which is more than a fact, becomes a recognised fact. This becomes à subject-object relation which the Pratya- bhijña theory of Kashmir Saivism accepts. This subject-object relation does not stop anywhere even in respect of a single object recognised. The limit of recognition ordinarily never reaches an end. Gradually, as time passes on, and as mind works on it, recognition unfolds itself from more to more and consciousness too gradually recognises more and more attributes in the same object. Thus knowledge, activised by the mind, with relation to an object, over-reaches the realm of mere objectivity, and transcends mere recognition; it becomes abstract subjectivised, in short, spiritualised. The progress of knowledge, therefore, utilises consciousness intuitively for recognition, and surpasses the limitness of the experience, till it transcends sense-perceptions, and gives to obvious realities a state of vivified spiritual idealism. Since this change is intuitively existing in all types of experience, the emergence of an idealistic state from realistic presence is natural, universal and inevitable. Of course, the principal cause for this change, may it be borne in mind, is Self- Consciousness or Cit, which is God, connoted in Vira-Saivism as 'Sthala'.

Sthala: The Original Cause, or Cit

Sthala literally means Space, the occupied space of a position. In Vira Saivism it denotes the original 'Cause' of the phenomenal existence as well as the final goal. In other words, Sthala is the occupied space, the Source, for the phenomenal object from its coming into being, to its going out of the being. It denotes and includes the entire evolutionary phase of an identity; it is a process that includes the empirical time, without touching the Cosmic Time which is outside its pale.

Cosmic time is flat, but dynamic. But during the course of evolution when beings appear in phenomenal sense, and objects appear, existence occur the event is related to Time. All existence is in Time; so is all dissolution in Time. Thus, it follows that the state of Eternity could only be a state of Non-Existence. To be Non-Existent is to be Time-less. The Eternal Consciousness, the Samvid of Sthala related to time is an

expression, a phenomenon, a being. It is an event in Time. But Sthala is not in Time. It is the Rest, the Peace, the Santam. It is static flat dynamism. It is the power asleep, but not dead. The ultimate expression of Sthala is Self-consciousness. It is the Unity of Apprehension of Kant.

If, then, from this ultimate unity of apprehension, from the Conscious Self, from the Absolute, from the Subject the objects of realisation: emanate, would it be correct to say that this field of Consciousness had reserved within it the incidental contingency of that which becomes conscious? Vira Saivism says that it is impregnated with that contingency.

Eternity and the Material Moment

Consciousness as Absolute is synthetically charged potentiality. It is a composite entity of subject-object, real-ideal, logical-illogical description. Logically derivable, Consciousness reserves the illogical 'I'-ness, ahamta, without which logicality could not be apprehended or recognised. This 'I'-ness constitutes what is in matter more than matter, its identity, its Being. Metaphysicians of old, according to Vasava, did not comprehend this material moment in Time while discussing the ideal Eternity of Consciousness, the Conscious Strata, the Field, the Stream. Out of the time-less Spirit of Consciousness emerges the material moment of I-ness in Time.

Consciousness and Ego

Instead of abstracting the thought of the formal and the material moments Vira Saivism insists that without the formal moment, i.e., the 'actual' moment in time it would have been impossible to experience even the conscious aspect of Śiva.

This is Siva in Eternity. 'I' must be in Time. Only then a recogni- tion is possible. Therefore the Conscious mind is a constituent moment in time, evolved out of the Eternal Consciousness with the faculty of being beware of things one has to be bewared of, not excluding the Supreme Being, the Eternal Time. This is Siva-Sakti. Sakti is the name given to the formal moment in Time. Thus Sakti is not T-ness

(Ahamta), the Ego; Sakti is Time-Consciousness, i.e. Ego's consciousness that is Ego. Ego it must be remembered, is not consciousness, or an evolute of consciousness.

Certainly this is a novel approach in Indian Metaphysics. If we remember the date (1160 A.D.) we should be able to connect this to the great period of Arabic learning, the teachings of the Neo-Platonists and the inescapable impact of the social philosophy of Islam. I want to draw a closer attention of the reader to the Pancacara and Astävarana canons of Vasava, and compare these to the Islamic canons, and make their own conclusions. A closer study of the Jangama Acaras and Abharanas, their heavy learnings on a monolithic rebel organisation tempts one to believe that the reforms of Vasava, both spiritual and social, had a modern slant on which psychology, social order and material considerations played a notable part. Recognition of the phenomenal world, and relating it to a metaphysical enquiry based on the Power of Consciousness automa- tically takes our mind to the development of the system of Tantra, which by this time had attained to its fullest maturity. If our theories about the migratory influx within the Hindu fold bear the test of history, then we must necessarily admit that the development of Vira Saivism, the training and followings of Väsava were restricted within the area strongly under the influence of the traditions of these migratory beliefs and practices.

In Tantra, Caitanya as Consciousness, is an indispensable source of Power for any metaphysical enquiry leading to Realisation. Thinking, Dhyana and Dharanã are impossible without Cif, or Consciousness, i.e., Siva. This cosmic Consciousness is charged with the powers of knowing and Being, Cit and Sat respectively; i.c., Sakti and Siva.

This is the Visistädvaita of the Säktas, and the Sakti-Visistädvaita of the Jangamas. It is an ultra realistic stand, and is known as Realistic Idealism.

The Lingam

Now for accepting the Lingam as a symbol. Already a passing reference has been made for the rationalisation of the use of the Lingam at the beginning of this section. We shall attempt now a metaphysical explanation based on etymology. Lingam is made of two parts: Li (to dissolve) and Gam (to move on). Etymologically, therefore, Lingam denotes the phenomenon of appearing into Sthala, or Space, as Being, and then disappearing into the Cosmic again. The Lingam is a constant reminder of this underlying philosophy. It is a total and plastic remin- der to the mataphysics of Sthala. The Lingam, the Sthala, is thus the Absolute, the Potent Cosmic in stillness; the Sivam.

From Sthala, to Gam to Li, and to Gam and to Li again, and so on and so on. The Cosmic theme is introduced to be withdrawn again and again to Time's end, till Time too goes to sleep. In spite of its static exterior it contains a dynamic philosophy. Jangama' means perpetual movement. It reminds of 'Caraineti' of the Aitareya, and Bergson.

What then is the aim of this dynamism? Of course, the fullness. This fullness does not denote a becalmed spirit, a stilled peace. That would not be Vira Saivism. All that it aspires to achieve is to bring about a complete maturity in the being's fullest meaningfulness. "To attain to a complete view of the world is the end of philosophy. The philosophic sense and intuition, therefore, present Reality in its comprehensive totality and concreteness. Changes it accepts; but it integrates them into Reality, for changes are conceived in Time."

Time for Vira Saivism has two distinct forms: the Metaphysical and the Mathematical Time. In mathematics changes occur, change being the inherent purpose and calling of mathematics. There would be no meaning in change without Time. This mathematical Time changes, while metaphysical Time continues, The river Thames continues, although the water below the Westminster Bridge changes. Totality continues; fractions undergo changes. Life continues; individuals change. In philosophy Reality is

integral continuity. Integers as products of change are not themselves products of integers. Products of integers form continuity.

II MINOR SECTS OF SAIVISM

1. Tantra: Magic and Mysticism

Besides the three main streams of orthodox Šaivism, already discussed there are several minor sects. These are not considered orthodox, due to their being contrary to the Vedic tenets, even to the Vedic culture (in) certain cases). One of these, however, Tantra, is indeed a great stream, within which falls the majority of the rites known as the Saivic rites. Although included under the minor sects, Tantra is in no way a minor stream; indeed it is a major stream, and the most influential stream of mystic rites in Hinduism. Its influence is both deep and widespread. Some regard Tantra to be the earliest indigenous system of adoration, and mystery-rites. It is categorised both as orthodox, as well as being outside the pale of the strictly Varnäsrama system. From a study of languages scholars have come to conclude that the canonical records of Tantra are post-Vedic; some of them indeed are as recent as to contain references to Radha, Caitanya,120 Vignugupta,10 Nityananda and even to London. This encroachment on modern times may not add authenticity to the texts, but it unmistakably shows, however, (a) the continuity of the system from even a pre-Vedic past, and (b) its universal popularity. In fact, the mystic in religion has been the earliest characteristic of fascination for rites and religions.

No other religious system has been so popular and universal as the religious mysticism of Tantra, or the cult of the Mother, in which all forms of magic, mystery, Nature-worship, Obeah, Voodoo, Shamman, and other similar rites from all parts of the Andes and the Himalayas, from the Elburz and the Pyrenees are included. In connection with our story of the Mother we have discussed the idealistic part of this system, of which Siva forms a father-figure, and the negative counterpart.

We have hinted at the fact that the primitive religious forms, although discarded as mystic, maintain a deep spiritual and religious significance, which scholars have now recognised specially after a closer study of com- parative religions. "The mystery gods arise out of those instincts, emotions, desires which attend and express life; but those emotions, desires, instincts in so far as they are religious, are at the outset rather a group than of individual consciousness. The whole history of epistomology is the history of clear, individual rational thought, out of the haze of collective, and sometimes contradictory representations." We must note the emphasis laid in these lines on the social and group emotions and thought, as different from individual experience and representation.

To my mind it is this difference between the group and the individual that distinguishes the tribal cults and the spiritual experience. What is practised as mysticism all over the world, in this way falls apart into two categories: the group experience, and the individual realisation. Both of these fall under the term Tantra, which as a word means a thread, a yarn, i.e., the continuity of a cord, tradition, or system. All rites are born of Tantra; all religions are born of Tantra.

The meaning of this system, and the appropriateness of the word becomes significant when we remember that around a Mother, Moon Goddess, a Candra, or a Candrasekhara (the Moon-crowned God) loops and loops of mysterious practices have been observed all over the human society of all times known to man from the prehistorical days of human culture. The extent and universality of Tantra in this way ranges beyond accountable times.

Primitive religion was not, as I had drifted into thinking, a tissue of errors leading to mistaken conduct; rather it was web of practices, emphasising particular parts of life, issuing necessarily in representations, and ultimately dying out into abstract con- ceptions, 134

The writer has been inspired, thus, under the spell of Bergson's theory of Duree, which emphasises the principle of continuity of life-mysteriously, incessantly, continuously,

indivisively and imperceptibly. To those who are acquainted with the theory of Mahakala and that of the Hindu Tantra-system, this inspired eloquence based on Bergson, and the pro- found truth that underlines it, should pose neither a surprise, nor a problem. A student of the Hindu systems of Patanjali or Kapila finds himself in a better position to appreciate the very correct conclusion of the learned scholar about 'representations', and its value to the Yogic Sadhana. Grasped in this light of the vibrancy of the living phrase, the application of 'dying abstract conceptions' becomes eloquently clear. The way of Yoga and Tantra, and the urge that arouses the Kundalini, countenance no kind of death at all. So understood, and followed, Tantra becomes a process of adding life; adding vigour and courage, and putting Life into life, and making all abstract ignite with a flame of energy. Energy is the only Reality in the Abstract. Energy is Sakti; Energy is Life, Kundalini's release means release of the fountain-head of Energy.

What we today are proud to reject as magical, often contains mystic values, unless we are talking of professional charlantans. "Ancient magic," says Dr. Frazer, "was the foundation of religion. The faithful who desired to obtain some favour from a god had no chance of succeeding except by laying hands on the deity."136

Inadequacy of Anthropology

Dr. Fraser working on this theme has elaborated that men having discovered the emptiness of magic still stood helpless against the whims and diabolic mysteries of nature, and created nothing to plant confidence to his bewildered sense of insecurity. Such a vacuum being an absurdity in nature, religion was introduced to fill in the gap. This is a perfectly tenable theory inasmuch as one finds the answers to the quests of one's soul in the study of anthropology. But anthropology is more or less a study of human behaviour in response to the material world. If there is any subject with which it is least concerned, it is spiritualism. Anthro- pology does not bother with it, neither does it bother about man's need or longing, for the spirit's understanding.

"Most of these writers have other ends in view, and have consequently not been concerned to pose the sort of questions which the social anthro- pologists automatically ask. Few of the more substantial works in this area of comparative religion pause to consider how the production of this religious ecstasy might relate to the social circumstances of those who produce it; how enthusiasm might wax and wane in different social conditions; or what functions might flow from it in contrasting types of society. In other words most of these writers have been less interested in ecstasy as a social fact than in ecstasy as an expression.... And where they have ventured outside their own native traditions to consider evidence from other cultures their approach has generally been vitiated from the start by ethnocentric assumptions about superiority."

If men were prepared to enter into different religious rites with as open a mind as they study different alphabets, or different languages, their efforts would produce more fruitful harvests in the store-house of human understanding. Contrary to its purpose, religious faith and solidarity have always been allowed to act as a deterrent to a liberal view, resulting in an unhealthy accommodation and tolerance. To this general handicap obsession in favour of the mischievous and artificial theory of a superior race has effected summary rejections, or even damnation of other religious views. Most world-religions speak of the same Ideal as God; but their differences in eschatological details, or ceremonial rituals bear the stamp of their times, and the places of origin. The demand of the soul of Eskimo would seek heat; and his heaven would be a sunny warm place. Not so of a Bedouin. His heaven has to be cool and moony. A religion of an oppressed community under the Imperial Romans would crave for peace; but these Romans, seeking glory in the far-flung battle-fields, and in bringing home the spoils of war under the pretext of Pax Romana would forge into shape a Mars or a Minerva or a Saturn as a divinity par excellence.

Apart from the human behaviour in response to the natural demands, man's soul hungers for the answers to some vital questions, which, together, constitute his spiritual world. In other words he longs to be free of the tyranny of the physical

demands, which keeps him bonded all his life as a slave to work for its satisfaction. He legitimately asks the question, "What is behind all this? Where is its beginning, and where its end? Why is it that if the poor is not happy, neither is the wealthy? Why is it that the temptation of playing false, or deceiving the credulous, the desire to possess even at the risk of life, truth, crime, murder, theft, cruelty, faith, loyalty duty, friendship must grip, as in a vice, even the highest in state; the wealthiest in society? Why is it that the wealthiest and the most powerful nations of the world are also the most morbid, obsessed, opaque, cold and demented? Why man must be donkey for getting loaded and loaded, for possessions and more possessions, without being able to solve thereby a single problem that affects his own inner life of joy, his own relaxation? How could such pitiable creatures presume to solve the difficulties of other nations and individuals by carrying the loads from one end to the other? What compels even the highest persons in society of the most powerful peoples to a situation where they are tempted like ordinary criminals to seek deliverence through a deliberate travesty of facts, and thereby become the laughing stock of the world opinion? Why?"

Anthropology observes, analyses, infers, theorises, and suggests what the social worker could work upon in the name of organisation. But anthropologists bypass those vital questions, and delegate them to the philosopher, who again is a theorist. He is logical, rational, in- tellectual, controversial, but not at all practical! He does not suggest a method for liberation. This has been tried by religion, and religion alone. But again, religion betrayed itself by seeking to make a capital of this calling and faculty through organised pressure-techniques, systematised brainwashings, and calculated dehumanisation of the humans, and de- spiritualisation of the spirit. The secretariat and the machinery of religious organisations introduced such reservations to free thinking and intellec- tual freedom as dogma, commandment, bull, rites, clerical bureaucracy, clerical commissions and propagating evangelical campaignings. Priestism has been known to hold at ransom a suffering man's inner peace, or a dying man's last hopes. From such an order of things it is not far to fall into the traps of war, politickings, tension-building and finally destruction, frustration and mutual hatred and filth-

slingings. From religion to tension and lack of peace. This is the tragedy. Actual liberation again becomes engulfed within controversial sects, rites and dogmas.

It was only in the system of Yoga that an attempt was made to analyse the causes of human tension, and the methods of getting liberated from them. It was complete in theory and practice without interfering with religion at all. Buddha, the apostate, had been a great Yogi.

Universality of Tantra

The mystic and ancient system of Tantra provided an answer to this situation. Origen knew about it; so did the Eleusians. Because this has been a universal problem, the system of Tantra too has been universally enquired into, and practised. Because it wanted to keep away from the warring churches, and the various complexities of the organised religions, because it decided to make itself meaningful to the 'mass' of mankind, it decided to remain direct, open, proletariat, traditional, preceptorial and extremely 'vulgar', without any need for any type of sophistry. Tantra is the most catholic of religious forms.

The decline of mysticism amongst the cultured urbanised prudes is due to the same mental ailment which acts as a deterrent for the pseudo-civilised snobs who blare such words as 'science' and 'scientific' in order to underrate, and even ridicule, religious practices as a whole. This type of cold indifference typifies an ailment; and it is traceable to an ego-centric self-consciousness which almost infallibly turns to such acquired haloes as 'social status' and 'public opinion' as if these were deep-delved fixations.

If Tantra has adopted any names for gods and goddesses, the qualified Tantric knows these names and forms as representative of certain Tantric ideas; and for actual practices these named gods and goddesses have been found to be the most helpful for concentration. Not only the deities, but even such objects as signs, forms, diagrams and such perceptual contacts as sights, sounds, tastes, even seating postures have been

taken into account, and recognised as efficacious for contributing to concentration. The Tantric way is a thorough way, and a total way. Of the gods and goddesses of its 'making' (through Dhyana and Dharand), the easiest and the most universal are, and could be only two-the Mother and the Father. The latter is not so emphatically adhered to as the former. Power alone is the Matrix of all. From Energy springs forth Creation. Urge is the Source. From urge and power proceed all; to that alone would all finality converge. This supreme quality of Energy-in-Matrix of radiating and converging, of centrifugality and centripetality, makes the Mother an Eternal source of perpetuity, a Power-Stream without end.

"We pray to the Para-devatä united with Śiva, whose substance is the pure nectar of bliss, red like unto vermillion, the young flower of the hibiscus, and the sun-set sky, who having cleft her way through the mass of sound issuing from the clashing and dashing of the two winds in the midst of Susumna rises to the brilliant Energy which glitters with the lustre of ten million lightenings. May She Kundalini, who quickly goes to and returns to Siva, grant us the fruits of Yoga! She being awakened is the Cow of Plenty to Kaulas, and the Kalpa Creeper of all things desired for those who worship her."139

The words Siva, Cow of plenty, Kalpa-creeper (1), or even Susumna have to be understood only in the sense that a Tantric understands. These ideas have other words in other languages, 'Cleft her way through the mass of sounds' for instance has been contained in the famous words at the opening of John; At first there was the word, etc., etc. The hymn of the Kouretes found at Palaikastro (1500 B.C.), the Popul Vub system in the Maya Scripture, Zunis (partly translated by James Price in the theosophical journal Lucifer), the Serpent-motif used in all Tantra practices, indicate the universality of the language of Tantra. The Mother-motif, and as her alter-ego, the Father-motif, remain universally the One-in- Two as Sound and Ether, Form and Substance, Word and Meaning, Matter and Energy. Emotion as a means of

concentration being of great assistance, the Mother image, the supreme projection of the most binding of emotions, has been universally used and accepted.

Thus the system of Tantra is not peculiarly Hindu, although a large collection of ancient scriptures, rather treatises, on Tantra-experiences and methods have found their way to India from all over Asia, collected from various languages, from the earliest days of written words, and unwritten traditions. The Semetics, the Iranians, the Chinese, the Tibetans, the Japanese, the Indonesians and the Indo-chinese all have contributed to the vast knowledge of Tantra. The Tantra traditions of the Mediterranean and the Aegean worlds, of Anatolia, Thrace, Egypt and Abyssinia have found their way to this centrally situated ancient land of India. This is why we could discover the phallic motif and the sex- images in Tantra in Tantric rites everywhere. All that has to be ancient and traditional has to be uninhibited. Inhibition is a necessary curse of civilisation. Our abhorrences of today had been the adoration of more innocent and natural times. The worshipper very often sought for the supreme experience putting himself in the role of the female, and describ- ing the impact in a language highly loaded with erotic symbolism. In a later chapter we have separately discussed the basis and the rationale of the use of the erotic images and erotic metaphors in mysticism.

Trance and Erotic Symbolism

Christianity, perhaps under the pressure of a repressive attitude towards sex, or its natural lack of confidence in anything other than its canonical dogmas, always thought little of mysticism, and of the Yogic way to tranquil trance. Christians have a strangeabhorrence about the pheno- menon of trance, which they almost always confused with what they termed as 'possession'. But devout Christians like Origen, Plotinus, St. Augustine, St. Theresa, and in our days Teilhard de Chardin would have other opinions. Persecutions on the basis of trance experiences have not been unknown to Christianity. "Orthodox Christianity has generally sought to belittle mystical interpretations of trance where these were claimed by those who experienced them to

represent divine revela- tions.... Sanction of heresy has proved to be powerful deterrent in curtailing and discrediting wayward personal experience."140

One of the reasons for such attitudes towards trance-experience is the erotic emphasis that is underlined by the subjects of such trances, and the subsequent expressions that such subjects as had experienced the trance made use of. Invariably such expressions adopt a language with over- tones of eroticism, using for the most part an erotic symbolism about the union of the worldly with the cosmic. Those who have been acquainted with Asvaghosa's Buddhacarita, Jayadeva's Gita-Govindam, the Natha poems, the Carya-padas, the Vaisnava and the Baul lyrics, Ananda Lahari hymn of Samkara, the poems of St. John on the Cross, the confessions of Theresa on the subject of Union (to which we have referred again and again), the poems of Tassso, Pindar, Sappho and Petrarch, should have reasons to entertain other opinions. Further substantiations in favour of a general practice of erotic expressions in mystical language is unnecessary. The Greek oracle at Delphos was mounted by the god Apollo; in Haiti the Voodoo cult expects the subject to undergo the transformation of a temporary death, as one does at the apex of an erotic consummation. All 'seizures' have been looked upon as interpretative of a voluptuous enjoyment of the erotic. Mystical sexual intercourse forms the very basis between the thrilled subject and his or her active thrill-giver partner, who is the possessing Spirit. The 'Hornbill-Watersnake' mystic rites, popular amongst the Dyaks of Southern Borneo is explicitly interpretative of sexual intercourse. They believe it to be a divine coition between the two supreme deities of the cosmic worlds. Dr. Lewis quotes from H. Scharer a part of the actual hymn: "The journey of Jata in her golden boat is ended. Mahätala has arrived in his boat of jewels. They let down the boat in the vagina of Jata, the Watersnake; they lower the staff of the Hornbill, Mahätala, into the open gong." Idioms of sexual union express spiritual union. It could easily lead to incest, as it does in some of the tribal Tantric rites (The priests of Puri Jagannatha at the annual Ratha Yatra festival openly accuse the divine Jagannatha of incest with his sister-alter-ego Subhadra; the Puranas

refer to incestual relations between Brahma and Sarasvati), or even to homosexuality, as students of Homer, Strabo and Hafiz would know.

Christianity itself admits of this sexual relation existing between the Church and the Christ, out of which has grown the grand peons of the sublime Song of Songs of Solomon. The Idea of the sacred Bridegroom is emotively charged in the mind of most of the devout Catholics, many of whom still have them dressed up in feminine fineries inclusive of the long gowns bedecked with laces and similar riff-raffs. Many like St. Bernard and St. John regarded the Christ as the Soul's Bridegroom. The Radha-Tantrics in a school of Vaisnavism transform themselves in the skin of Rädhä, the central Matrix in the Radha-Tantra-Cult, and sup- posed to be the sole spiritual alter-ego of Krsna the Yogesvara. These attain their Samadhi in feeling a perfection of union with the Yogeśvara Krsna whilst they remain in the role of Rädhä Räseśvari. In Islam, particularly in Sufism, such a relation between Maashuq and Aashiq is still held in very high esteem.

"Ecstatic communion is thus essentially a mystical union; and, as the the Song of Solomon and other mystical poetry abundantly illustrates, experiences of this kind as are frequently described in terms borrowed from erotic love. Indeed as Earnest Jones has justly observed, 'the notion that sexual intercourse can occur between mortals and supernatural beings is one of the most widespread human beliefs'."142

This is the reason why the practice is called mystic, and why the knowledge is not parted except to the very capable and reliable initiate, whose ability has been again and again tested. The use of drugs and promiscuity characterise some of the rites and forms; whilst some others meticulously abstain from any unethical and toxic indulgents. It is no wonder that in the name of Tantra a host of charlatans, braggarts and rascals flourish behind a facade of spirituality only to fulfil their sexual and carnal appetite. Any idea entertained about an instant religion must be looked down upon with deserving scorn.

Antiquity of Tantra

The earliest evidences of Tantric practice in India indicate the uses of Symbols and Signs. Indian coins of the pre-7th and 6th cent. B.C. bear some of these mystic signs. The Vedas also refer to such mysticism, specially the Atharvan. A Tantra-Master emphasises that Tantra rites accept the Vedas as Germinals. The Saubhagya-Kända of the Atharvan is often quoted in support of the claim.

There are other evidences to indicate Tantra's connections with the Vedas. Kulärnava Tantra (Nepal Library) begins with the sentence: So said the Deol in the Atharvan Samhita. She has been called Atharvaśäkhing (Rudra-Yamala). The 32nd verse of Samkara's famous hymn Ananda- Lahari demands references to the Vedas and Brahmanas (see commentary of Lakṣmidhara). Taittiriya Aranyaka, Atharvan, and Aitareya Aran- yaka (IV: 27) refer to Tantra Cakras and Mantras. Kulärṇava Tantra (11: 10:11: 85) not only claims that the Tantras have the Vedas for their soul, but actually quotes some Vedic verses.14 This includes references to the uses of intoxicants in such sacrifices as Śrautamani and Vajapeya. Of course, the sacrifices of animals: horses, bulls, lambs and goats, which Tantra admits in some of its rites are also supported by the Vedas; but this does not mean that Tantra had to depend for its popular acceptance on the Vedas, and had no independent status. In fact, the development of Tantra has always been not only independent of the Vedas, but in many instances, even in spite of the Vedas. But it is good to know that because a rite is Tantric, it need not be considered as unorthodox by those for whom Vedas and Vedas alone deserve to be called orthodox.

Both Buddhism and Jainism are known to be unorthodox. Yet most of their rites have Tantric overtones. No religious system is entirely free from the charm of Tantra. Tantra is ritualism, and ritualism is Tantra. Jesus himself has been regarded, along with Gautama Buddha, and with the Monist Samkara, to have been a great Tantric Master. Consult for example the Tevijja Sutta, and the Brahmajäla Sutta, and the Miracles of

the Christ. Samkara has been known to have entered into the body of a dead King, and practised those physical acts, which as an ascetic he was forbidden to make his body suffer.

Though the Tantras have their remote connections with the Vedas, and the Vedic Literature, it is very doubtful if the literature of Tantra is as old as the Vedas. The language, for instance, betray a time when the Anuştup-rhythm had been well formed, and the epic forms had introduced a standardised treatment for religious treatises. All that have reached our hands, from linguistic evidence, indicate a post-Vedic development of the Tantra canonical literature.

Tantra-Veda Controversy

But Tantra had its adversaries all the while. As a matter of fact, the history of the survival of Tantra against perpetual schismic and canonical opposition, which sometimes assumed the awful proportion of political disfavour, proves the diehard tenacity of a system which held strong bonds amongst not only the reserved and almost charmed circle of the four castes, but also amongst the non-Aryan tribes and hordes. periodical influxes of foreigners who made India their adopted home from time to time fell to the easy charms of Tantric rites. Tantra treatises date as far back as the 10th and 11th cent. A.D.; and in the Agamas of the Tamils (9th cent.) references to Tantra have been unmistakably traced. The Chinese pilgrim Fa-Hien used to recite the Surangama Sutra, which is as old as the 1st cent. A.D. The Buddhist Tantra literature is both more ancient, and more extensively known. These were known to China (Amoghabajra 746-771 A.D. translated 77 texts of which some had been Tantras), Tibet and Japan (Hariuji Pagoda has some of the ancient texts).

This does not mean that all Tantrics were favourably disposed towards the Vedas. Tantrics themselves suffered from the inevitable pressure of schisms. These were divided on the forms of general acceptability of rites, most of which changed according to personal experiences of the Siddhas (liberated Souls), and the Gurus.

Much ink and breath were wasted on denouncing and counter-denouncing the differing ways. Like religious schisms anywhere a terrific amount of pamphleteering appears to have been the order of the day. It is in this connection that we hear of the criticisms of

such sects as the Pañcaratras, Pasupatas, Mäheśvaras and Käpälas, as well as of the Vedas. Of the first two we shall learn later, but about the criticism of the Vedas we note here that some forbid the Tantra sects to keep away from the Vedic rites 144 "The Vedas are too old to be of any effective assistance for realisation." (Kaka-Candelvari: Nepal Library.) "Like the common prostitutes the Vedas, Puranas and Smrtis are for all and sundry; but this Vidya from Sambhú (Tantra) calls for intimate privacy, as would do a lady of class." Kulluka Bhatta quotes Härita as saying that both Tantric and Vedic Smrtis are orthodox.146

Howled the Vedists back at the Tantrics. Obviously they attacked, as we ourselves would do (hypocrites as we all are more or less), the anti- social aspects of the Tantric rites, such as eroticism, promiscuity, drugs and alcohol, and of course, the uses of meat and fish.

If we have noted some of the facts stated in previous chapters, we could easily appreciate that the phallic trends in the tribal sectors were as popular in the Indian subcontinent as in the later alien trends which had been trying to secure a foothold amongst the Hindus. But the Vedic, and specially, the Vedantic way of life, which had become synonymous with the Indian way of life, studiously avoided to be involved in anything phallic. For this Orthodox Hinduism, which always and invariably held on to the Vedic ideas and ethics, sharply reacted against the phallic trends. Tantra, and Saivism by their practices so much resembled the phallic, that the real phallic worshippers greeted the opportunity with glee and excitement, and under the cover of Saivism and Tantricism prepared to gain grounds. They wanted to push on the phallic, as the Mäheśvaras, Somas and the Käpälikas did, under such leadership as was given by Uditācārya and the Guptas, and Varahamihira. The experts and the scriptural writers were only too vigilant to let it grow. In this regard the Haihayas of Tripuri, and

Banabhatta of Kashmir adopted almost an ascetic course, which was the accepted form of the Siddhantins. This could further be studied from the great acidity with which the con- troversy on phallicism was carried on. Students of the Mahayana and Hinayana schools of Buddhism know that the Buddhist schism was mainly based on erotic mystic rites. Because of certain writings of Samkarācārya, he too, has been denounced in some quarters as being lukewarm towards the 'heinous' trends of the phallic in Saktism.

"An upstart by the name of Māheśvara, taking advantage of the accidental similarity of names, has been preaching anti-Vedic Tantricism, and named it to be directly derived from Mahadeva himself!" This statement of Vedottamã reminds of another similar attack on the opposite camp. "We are of the opinion that a cheat by the name of Vasudeva, taking advantage of a coincidence of names, has concocted those Tantra rites, and attempted to get it popularised."14" The Sattvatas in Kürma Purana too have been similarly condemned for attempting to pack the orthodox religion with fraudulent phallic trends.

Tantra as a class has offered traditionally a highly spiritual way to the Sadhakas, and the treatises going by the names of the innumerable Tantras record what is only the special and personal experiences of each of the Sadhakas. The Yoga aphorisms of Patanjali clearly mention that for a Yogi the selection of a Mantra, or that of a deity depends on personal choice.149 Naturally, each of the Sadhakas shall have to have his or her own experience; and this has to refer to a special Mantra or Deity, or even to a special type of rite, which is to be responsible for the success of the individual. In this way the Sadhaka's own experience becomes his or her Tantra.150 And such records are indeed innumerable.

Yet there are some standard works. These are named after Siva or Sakti. These are, as we should know by now, the Agamas and Nigamas. This is the nucleus of orthodox Tantra. We have referred to Vasugupta's Sivasútra. He himself has stated that he 'got it from Šiva'. Śree-Mato- ttara Tantra, supposed to be the direct heritage from Śiva, has

for its author the celebrated Tantra Sadhaka Sri-Kantha-Nätha. Dr. Chinta- haran Chakravarty considers that Tantra prcedes all other forms of rites in an antiquity, and even its extent written records are much earlier than the dates of the Puranas.141 We find mention of the Pasupatas (Śiva), and the Pañcaratras (Visnu) in the Mahabharata.

But the Tantra writers, and the Tantra commentators have always been trying to prove the orthodoxy of Tantra by referring its main tenets to the Vedas. The remarkable thing to be noted in these contro- versies is the fact that the main body of Hinduism abhorred and discarded vehemently all phallic and erotic trends attempting to infiltrate into it under the pretext of either Tantricism or Saivism. We have taken up the subject of Tantra within our study of Saivism with a view to note that Saivism itself admits of Tantra, because it admits of Agama and Nigama. But in the name of Tantra and, therefore, in the name of Saivism, phallic trends did attempt to alienate the orthodox Saivic Idealism. But the records are straight about the condemnation of the phallicists. Tantra itself was non-Vedic; but the people accepted it. Yet phallicism they rejected. This is remarkable. Puranas clearly mention Tantra as being non-Vedic. But it is indeed significant that Tantra itself, while main- taining its phallic overtones, condemns phallicism!

The Tantra Doctrine

The system of Tantra is based on a sublime exposition of metaphysical analysis of the most sophisticated type. It reveals the relations between Matter, Spirit and Consciousness. Even its rites are inspired by an urge for transcendental aspirations. It aims at one objective: the ultimate union of the seeker and the sought. This phenomenal world is nothing but an ephemeral expression of the eternal, playing with its own playful and sportive inspirations. This is the Will; this is the Mother, the Matrix of the World-phenomenon. This is the Power, the Sakti. It is inlaid within all the objects in the material world, more so within the human frame, which is Consciousness. Human consciousness has immense possibilities, about which the average man is not even aware. Once this is impressed on the mind, and once mankind

becomes aware of the profundity and range of this consciousness, man would not spare himself in reching the apex of this Power. And for this he has to arouse it. Once this is aroused, from what is known as a sleeping state, it grows and grows, until the Power appears to pervade both Time and Space and engulf the world of the many into an experience of the One. A person who has mastered this immense Power is a Yogi. He alone is Superman, and is capable of achieving liberation not only for himself, but for all. He is the chosen One; the Godsend One; the Messiah. He bears the badge and the message of authority directly received from the Supreme.

Antaryaga and Mantra

There are rites to achieve this. Asana, Mudra, Nyard, as well as Antar- yaga (Inspired dedication beyond the ken of any) are some of its most

"In 'union' there must be To; and the duality continues; and the resultant clay is a third factor. In merging they become One.

important aids. The piercing of the Six-Cakras is the most seriously laid out preparation for a successful Antaryaga. So is Mantra another previous acquisition towards success.

"There is perhaps no subject in the Indian Sastra which is less under- stood than Mantra." Mantras cannot be and should not be translated. It is not so much in the given meaning that the meaningfulness of the Mantra rests; a Mantra's meaningfulness rests on what it reveals itself to be to the particular individual. The locales of the uttering, elocu- tionary mechanism of the Mantras are more significant. There is hardly any, if at all, any imperative importance of what a man 'learns' to be a meaning. No word can reveal its fullest meaning unless fully 'realised'.16 It is in the process of the realisation of the meaning that the value and the joy of a meaning lies. Sounds by themselves, or the mechanisms of the sounds are not important. Mantra is not just a conglomeration of jingling, juggling sounds. At times certain arranged sounds appear to have no meaning at all. Yet as Mantras these are revered; this is so because of the underlying

'Sound' or 'Sonic' effect, which, according to the Maheśvara Sûtra effect a relation between particular sound-waves and the corresponding responses in the Nadis, or Nerve-centres. The Spirit's only tangible form is Sound. 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God.' The secret and the substance of the justification of the efficacy of Mantra has been laid out in these words in St. John's Gospel.

The Monism of Tantra is very close to the affirmation of Vedänta. Vedanta has been the sheet anchor for the Vaisnava Bhaktas, the Saiva Bhaktas and the Tantra Bhaktas. Each has leaned heavily on Vedanta and Monism, thereby proving once again the non-sectarian and the non- theologic character of true metaphysics. Each of the sects have explained the contents of the Vedanta in a special way. Of course, casuistry has not spared either Tantra or Vaisnavism from being called anti-Vedantic. One could expect such demonstration of scholasticism from the puerile pedagogues. "Foolish like a book-worm," says an Arab proverb. The fact is that haloed spiritualists (Aurobindo, Ramakrishna, Vämä, Tailanga Svämi, Bhaskarananda Svämi, Moinuddin Chisti, Nizamuddin Aulia) have found for themselves that the monistic Vedänta and Tantra synchronise entirely.

Misuse of Tantra-Rites

Many have referred to the rites of Tantra with scorn. This is not unexpected. Those who watch from outside, without getting involved in the esotericism of Tantra, get the shock of their lives as they hear that Tantra recommends the Five-M's (Matsya, Mansa, Madya, Maithuna, and Mantra), i.e., fish, flesh, wines, copulation, and the mystic syllable, for attaining to its highest state of Liberation. But we have the unimpeach-able evidence of impeccable Yogis, renowned for their austerity on our side. Sarvananda, Vämä, Ramakrishna Paramhamsa, Ramakrishna of Natore, Krishnananda, Nilakantha, Abhinavagupta, Samkaräcärya, Sahib Kaul, Lal Deed, Bhairavi Brahmani and many others would line up in defence of the absolute purity of Tantra and its practices.

Those who adopt the Tantric way for the satisfaction of greed, avarice, lust or even for the fun of having a good time, and having accepted an initiation, misuse the Mantra by physical coitus, shall have to undergo the penalties of a roaring hell.... 167 It is usual and popular practice to indulge in drinks. By limiting its use to religious and social forms, an attempt has been made to sublimate an instinctive and natural craving in the humans....16 But any one making use of Tantra as an excuse for drinking alcohol has to be severely penalised. Wash his face with boiling liquor, and scorch his tongue therewith.

The Guru has to assume the responsibility, and guide. The pitfalls are many; and once there is a fall, the reactions, even spiritually, are highly dangerous, as could be seen in the extensive misuse of drugs in the name of Yoga. "Those who by themselves desire to adopt the Tantra way, and succeed, without the aid from a realised Guru, are only trying to cross the ocean depending on their two bare hands."10 "It is easier to walk over the edge of a sword, or embrace a tiger by his neck, or hold a live cobra in hand, than to attempt success in the Tantra way without the direct training from a proper Guide." The great Kaulas, i.e., the Tantra Masters, have again and again condemned the ways of the Käpälas, the Nagnas, the Ksapanakas, and similar other unorthodox wayward sects given to alien phallistic forms. The noblest and the most revered of the Tantrics, like the Samayas, actually are not given to any rites whatsoever; whatever they practise, they do incognito, unobserved, main- taining their secrets closely, away even from their own limbs. The esoteric meaning of the five M's is explained by the Guru himself, who forbids their practice in the physical plane.

The M's Explained

Fish thus, is a symbol of Pranayama and secrecy; meat enjoins solid action with a determinedly motivated aim; its total dedication is the enjoy- ment of the 'meat' of the purpose. The union is the finality of the union of the Jiva (self) with the Brahman (cosmic Being), so that the personal self, as the female (positive) part remains actively subjugated and expectant, and the Cosmic Being as the supreme Male (Negative)

witnesses the urging on-coming and all relieving effacing dedication without any perturbance in Its state. The sublimest of the Tantrics have, by their example, forbidden all to indulge in these rituals, and to adopt the words in their obvious ephemeral physical sense.

But in certain extreme forms of Tantra, like the Mahayana Vajra system of Tibet, the five M's have been physically taken up and used as penance. The most celebrated saint in history, along this line, is the haloed Lama Limpon Rinpoche, closely followed by Gyalwa Rinpoche. The life-activities of these Tibetan Lamas read like miracle, whereas in their own lives, they had kept themselves studiously away from showmanship. Whenever the spiritualists become the direct correspondents of the ESP-world, we who follow our own materialist science (sic!) almost with a mesmerised superstition about its infallibility and finality, call their phenomenal acts as 'miracles'. The greatest miracle is that we expect miracles, and believe in them with infantile credulity, gulping down avidly the absurdities with a view to find an escape from our guilt-laden personalities. Before anyone 'makes' a miracle, we ourselves concoct, and see them. This does not, however, ignore the special powers (Vibhuti) a Yogi is able to acquire (according to Patanjali) in materialising objects, or levitating, or dematerialising, etc. The point is we who judge a Yogi through these and these alone and not through the peace and calm he radiates, often get a magic-man when we seek

a

Yogi. We must ourselves be prepared to receive a Yogi's blessings, and not get amazed by his 'magic' skills.

"Scientology may be more successfully organised as business venture than most of the Spiritualist churches which it succeeds and to some extent supplants. But it has much in common with them in seeking to blend pseudo-science and occult experiences in that special package deal which sells so well today. These and a host of other new competing cults strive to fill the gap left by the deadline of establishe-1 religion and reassort the primacy of mystical experience in the face of the dreary progress of secular- ism....We live in an age of marginal mysticalrecrudescence, a world where humanists seem positively archaic. Our vocabulary has been enriched, or at any rate

added to, by a host of popular mystical expressions, which if enshrined in the special argot of the Underground, also spill over into gene- ral usage. We know what 'fresh-outs' are; what 'trips' are, and any one who wants to, can readily participate in psychedelic happenings in dance halls with evocative names like 'Middle Earth'. Although most of these names relate to drug taking, in its original and most extensive usage, it also carries strong mystical overtones."163

The passage so critical of what is happening in the spiritual world in the name of mystic experience does not only do credit to the author, but it does much credit to the newly developed faculty of comparative religion. One wonders, if this study had been developed in the 18th cent., when European scholarship and press were primarily engaged in indulging in scurrilous writings about Eastern religions, whether it would have inspired the scholars more empathetically towards the vast esoteric treasure of the Eastern continent. Undoubtedly such studies would have a profound effect on the Western churches. If the Western churches had adopted the reasonable attitude of the humanist towards mysticism of the East, without adopting the detestable imperialistic attitude of a superior race, not only would the Western mind have gained, and profitted enough to have avoided the catastrophes of World Wars, and the resultant waves of cynicism that has clouded the youth minds, but would also have greatly augmented the philosophic and metaphysical basis to its religious beliefs. A sad lack of it has caused the Western Churches to stand without a realistic basis for its dogmas. As a result, today, it appears to stand bare of values, even of plausibility. The youth of the West desire something more fundamental, and real. The vacuum left by the blatant and palpable want of a direct ethical and social sense of equity in the system produced by the Western religions, has not been successfully filled in by the Church, which still tries to protect its dogmas, with a seeming face-saving condescen- sion of accepting modern values. This ludicrous stage-make-up brings to a higher lime-light the emptiness of the beauty of an old hussy, who deserved all respect to the dignity that age bestows on experience. The nineteenth century had begun to sound the solidity of the Western church; the twentieth shocked it and rocked it by industrial politics and

commercial frauds. Religion for the future man is going to adhere to the mystic mind. The striving generations are engaged in slicing out for them a place in the sun, where the air of unpolluted honest convictions could help them reach their own depth. They are out for reaching a fourth dimension where Truth is not only a Reality, but also a just Reality. This has to happen.

The Ancients of Eastern Tantra, in contrast, had much to contribute, both as a realistic approach, and as a tangible and possible way out. Its value has been, over the imperialistic centuries, systematically ignored. The mystic rites have been held to ridicule. For the justification of the grip of the aggressor the cultural and spiritual superiority of an ancient heritage has been again and again, by writers, misrepresented,
and even mis-stated and mis-quoted. The study of comparative religions is gradually lifting up this intellectual barricade. The value of Tantra and Tantricism has been boldly brought out before the Western world by a consummate practitioner of Tibetan Tantra. We hear from him about the basis of the use of a sex-motivation for the cultivation of spiritualism.

Far from being magical or even mystical, Tantricism is essentially pragmatic, and it seeks a pragmatic explanation for all phenomena. As for the assertion that it is a perverted doctrine that is contrived to permit unlicensed indulgence in sexual and other forms of de- bauchery, this can only be said by those who have no knowledge of Tantricism. There are man of us in Tibet who disapprove of Tantra...; we believe that this path is too dangerous, and follow- ing the path of Buddha we try to concern ourselves with huma- nity as a whole, but not with a very few adepts for whom Tantras are suitable. Sexual energy and narcotic are recognised as being sources of power in the physical world. Sexual union in parti- cular is considered as the greatest creative act possible in this material world, and it is thought of as embodying the whole principle of creativity. To this the Tibetan Lamaed schools of Tantricism have added the dual principles of preservation and destruction. The appropriate rites to the uninitiated, read as though the participants were indulged in not only sexual activities but also in an orgy of blood. In almost any temple one may see sacred figures of

deities, male and female, locked in sexual em- brace; and further they and other deities may be represented in either a peaceful or fierce aspect. These images symbolise the principles, not to induce the body to activity. These rites are performed with similar symbolism, and long before the novice is introduced to them, he is expected to have attained a complete mastery over his physical impulses. Any thought that the rites implied license to indulge in sexual activity, or to commit actual blood sacrifice, would be considered the greatest heresy. The power of sex cannot be denied, even by the most prudish; for they too were born of its power. The Tantras try to grasp the basic principles involved, and so arrive speedily at the true understanding of the nature of being.164

Besides Tantra there are some other forms of Saivas. The Viragama Tantra mentions the following: Samanya Saiva, Parea, Sriva, Mitra Saiva, Suddna Saiva. The Puranas mention Pasupatas, Lagudas, Kāpālas, Bhairavas, Somar. The Bhamati commentary of the Vedanta Sutra mentions the Mäheivaras, but subdivides them into four sections: Saivas, Paiupatas, Karunikas, or Kathakar, and Kapalikas. The Karunikas have also been named as Kathakas, or Kälämukhas. They are distinguished by such characteristics as covering body with the ashes from the crematory remains, using a skull-cup as an eating vessel, keeping a thick short stick in hand and filling a pitcher with wine for adoration. In the following pages we shall attempt to deal with some of them, and with the two trends of Tantra and Bhagavata influencing them.

We start with the most important of the minor sects, the famed Näthas. They had some influence in Northern India, specially in the area where Buddhism had been in control over a long time, viz., Bihar, Bengal, Nepal and partially Assam and Kashmir. This is the famous sect of Yogis known as the Natha, Siddhas, simply the Nathas.

2. The Nathas

There are almost sixty thousand Näthas in India. There are ten times more this number who indirectly conform to the Nätha (Kanphatta-the split-eared ones) ways, which

include Siddhas, Sahajas, Bauls, Yogis, or Jugis, Avadhutas and Käpälas. Places like Hariharnätha (in Sonepur, Bihar), Gorakhnatha (Gorakhpur, in Uttar Pradesh), Tilla in the Punjab are known for devotees to the Näthas, although all the visitors are not Näthas by adoption of the creed itself. Places like Varanasi (where there are temples dedicated to Viśvanatha, Bhairavanatha, Kedaranatha, etc.), Kedaranatha, Pasupati- natha, Parsvanatha (in Chittagong) are highly esteemed by the Yogi- nathas. Many think that Puri Jagannatha, Konäraka and the Khajuraho temples observe or observed the Nätha rites. They are confused with the Bhairavas, who conform to rites considered as terrible, as well as with the more mystic and secluded Avadhutas. But the Nathas themselves are quiet, and much more austere in comparison. (The localities named are all Indian.)

They are generally known as Jugis, i.e., Yogis. Mendicancy distinguishes them from other ascetics. They travel at times single, and at times with a disciple, or a female companion, throughout India, and are held in respect everywhere. There are female Näthas known as Nathinis. But these are mostly widows, who have taken to the religious life of Yoga. Since widow-remarriage was prohibited amongst the higher caste, some of the widows embraced the Nätha cult, and took to a way of life more or less independent of their restrictive society.

The greatest names in the Nätha-Pantha (the way of the Nathas) are Matsyendra (or Macchindra or Minendra)-Nätha, Gorakhnatha, Jalandharanatha and Haḍi-pa. It is believed that the Nätha-way developed in Bengal with headquarters in the Taraf lands of Nepal. Tibetans and the Mahayana Buddhist Tantricism contributed much to the development of the Näthas. Nepal itself with the famous Pasupatinatha, is a great centre of the Näthas. We have literature of their Yogic experiences; particularly the Näthas treasure a set of books from Jalandhara, and recorded instructions from Matsyendranatha and Gorakhnatha. The first two of these wrote in Bengali and Sanskrt, and the latter one in ancient Rajasthani and Hindi, which is regarded as some of the earliest forms of Hindi language and literature. These are known as Dohās and

Gathas. Gorakçavijaya is popular chronicle, which is sung in ballad-forms throughout Northern India by the devouts.

Matsyendra who had introduced this particular Yoga system got it popularised by his able disciple, Gorakṣanätha, who had two well-known disciples in Räni Mayanamati and Jalandhara-nätha. Both Jalandhara and Gopicandra (a Prince of Bengal) as well as his mother Mayanamati, are historical names. Another name, that of king Bhartrhari of Ujjain, himself a Nätha Yogi, adds historicity to this sect.

The Gurus of the Näthas are usually referred as being born without seminal or uterian tarnish. Thus, having no trace of parenthood these are known to have belonged directly to the same caste as Siva or Rudra. This gives them the title to the use of 'Natha' as their surname. Princess Suryavati, daughter of King Sudhanvä, of the Cola dynasty, had a son born to her as a gift from Siva. Since she had this son through her Yogic power, the followers of this system became known as Yogi. They are also known as Kan-phatta, because they had to pierce the cartileges of their ears, and pass a heavy ring, known as Dariana, around, which, by its weight, cut longish slits up to their ear-lobes. Even Gautama Buddha was supposed to have this mark on him. The Näthas maintain a precious fond regard for Gautama Buddha, and respect a number of Jinas.

The Nathas believe in the Sarira-Sadhana, known as Nätha Yoga. which advises its followers to train 'the body' in a manner that the functions of the physical state of the personal body, as well as those of the physical outside, became related as mere mechanisms, could be guided by the will of the Yogi. Outwardly viewed, the physical laws of bodies appear to be violated; but for the Yogis, and to the Yogis, this kind of contraries appears to be quite logical and easy, provided the Yogi in question does not fall under the temptation of the occult. Thus, acts like levitation, awakening of the dead, living within a dead body, or living within any other body, understanding the conversations of the other forms of life, of a tree, a blade of grass, and ant, a tiger, an elephant, a fowl or a fish becomes to a Yogi a normal affair. The great Bhairavas of the Näthas, whom we discuss below, have the names in a couplet. These are: Adinatha,

Matsyendra, Šavarananda, Cauranginätha, Minanatha, Gorakṣanatha, Virupaksanatha and Vilaganatha. Some of them are still believed to be alive, for death of them is only a place of being, and completely within control. The decay of cells which causes death being a change in body, and they being masters of the body, such changes which cause the decay of cells do not affect them.

A number of legends about these Gurus of the Näthas are current in Bengal. Ballads and plays have been written on these legends, and in the manner of miracle plays are still played in the villages. The legend of Jalandhara, also known as Hadi-Pä, is movingly similar to the legend of Gautama Buddha. He has been associated with royal families of the time. The famous Chaurangee Place in Calcutta bears the memory of Cauranginatha, who had founded a township there; similarly, the Kall temple of Kalighat is supposed to have been founded by Goraksanatha himself; and the nearby Siva temple of Nakuleśvara is known to be a seat of the Näkulisa Bhairavas.

The Nathas are known as Navanathas from the nine Gurus they accept as their chiefs. The lists differ, but the names we have mentioned are common to all the lists. All of them admittedly were Saivas, although many mistake them to be a sect of the Buddhists. Like Saivas they wear the car-rings, they visit Saiva pilgrimages; they worship the Bhairavas and Mother Käll, like a section of the Tantric Saivas. The cult has been common amongst non-castes and outcastes, which again confirms their Šaiva leanings. The Nathas are confused with the Buddhists. This is so because Matsyendranatha is considered to be identical with Avalokites- vara, the fourth Bodhisattva. But there is a number of other reasons to believe that because of this honour paid to Matsyendranatha alone, it would be wrong to take the Näthas as Buddhists. The Mantras that the Yogis, or the Näthas chant are two: Siva-Goraksa, and the seed-syllable of Avalokitesvara. A seventeenth century edict in Nepal says: "Hail to the Purusa, the Brahma in body, known as Matsyendranatha by the Yogis, and Lokeśvara by the Buddhists." The identity of Matsyendranatha is complete, but that does not finally make the Nathas turn into Buddhists. There are twelve sects amongst

the Näthas. These are actually twelve classes which feature some of the characteristics of the caste system, although the Yogis should be above any classification. Like horse amongst the Gauchos, Camels amongst the Arabs, Llamas amongst the Peruvians, 'isms' in the socialistic communities and dollar in America, caste is an obsessional topic in India, where even the Mussalmans and the Christians do not escape their caste-undertones.

The cult of the Näthas is also known as the Avadhuta-Marga, Siddha Märga or Yoga Marga. We hear of the Yogis and the Siddhas as technically separate forms of religious beliefs, and invariably these have been associated with Siva and Saivism. We also hear of another class known specifically as the 'Siva People', who, by their disaffection of Caste, were counted amongst the Saivas. Matsyendranatha is traditionally regarded as the first expounder of what is now known as Hatha Yoga. It is said that he got it from Siva himself. Some of the Asanas mentioned in Hatha Yoga are known as Matsyendra-Asana and Gorakṣa Asana.

Nada and Nadi

The Nathas emphasised on the esoteric significance of Nada and Nadi We have already noted the theory of Nada in our study of the Trika. The mystic syllable Om is accepted as the sound-form of Nada. The cosmic sound is regarded as the most vibrant medium to contact the cosmic Consciousness, and Mantra becomes extremely effective in this way for the Yogis of the Nätha sect.

Nadi, of course, is the system of the nerves so well described in the study of the Cakras in Tantra. The Sadhana of Nadi concerns itself with the control of body and impulses, while Cakra concerns itself with the esoteric development of transcendental Consciousness.

Some regard the Näthas as the forerunners of the famous Sahajiyä saints. The Sahajas accept Nada-Sadhana; in rare cases, however, they adopt the Hatha Yoga which is a favourite with the Bauls yet another sect considered under the Näthas, the Nada

practitioners are closer to the orthodox school because of the fact that the Upanisads mention the ex- cellence of the mystic letter. If Matsyendra and Acarya Lui Päda are regarded to be the identical personality, as some do think, then the Näthas have to be regarded as canonical sect. But we find some more concern- ing evidences to believe that Hatha Yoga is associated with the Nathas. In the book Goraksa Bedha, Goraksa Nätha has indicated certain rites which favour Hatha Yogic practices. Siva Samhita

and Gheranda Sam- hitä refer to certain Asanas known as Matsyendra Asana, Jalandhara Bandha, Sunya-väda, and Kundalini Tattva. They also refer to certain Mudras known as Amaroli, and Vajroli. They are also given to the very mystic Khecari and Kundalini Sadhana.

All these indicate Hatha Yoga, although Lui Pada and some other Siddhas favoured the Sahaja way. In a treatise known as Amanaska- Yoga-Vijam the devotee has been advised to attain his Realisation through a Yogic practice which is based on Understanding and knowledge. It is a form of Dvaitadvaita (Dualistic monism), similar to Tantra view of the Supreme. The body made of the Sapta Dhatu (Rasa, Asthi, Mansa, Majjä, Meda, Asrk and Sukra (Humour, bone, flesh, marrow, fat, blood and semen respectively) has to be conquered through the heat radiated by Yoga; for this one has to depend on the control of breathing as prescribed by Pranayama. 1 "Hatha is a word composed of Ha and Tha, when Ha stands for the Sun and Tha for the Moon; the former in Prana, and the latter in Apăna."

Some of the Yogis in the Nätha cult recommend Ulta Sadhand (contrary practice) which is another form of physical Yoga. It is meant for getting rid of the dictate of the demands of the 'Body'. It ultimately makes the entire body-system function along a contrary way, so that the different respiratory, circulatory and digestive organs come under control. Such control over the body, and its functions could lead one to immortality in the sense that his death comes under his control too.

Han-Fa, Käni-Fi, Kanu-Pä, Hädi-Pá are some of the great Natha Yogis. På or Få means 'Maestros' in Tibetan. Kumbhari Pab, Śringari Pab are great names, where the same På

or Få became Pab. Taus Pab forms another Nätha, and as such are Šaivas. Most of the saints amongst the Pabs are born of the lowest of castes, which did not prevent them. from attaining to the greatest respect amongst the Saivas. The Siva- narayanis, another Bengal sect, that had gained wide followings amongst the lowest of castes borrowed much of their Yogic ways from the Näthas and the Hatha Yogis. The form was known as Käyä Sadhana.

The legend of Gopicandra and Mayanamati (Narrated later) so dear amongst the people of the Northern India, has many recensions, some of which could be traced forward to the legends of other lands, their common distinguishing characteristic being mysticism.

But to consider the Näthas as pacific would be wrong. In fact, they could be militant as only the British came to know in the Sannyasi Rebellion, when they spear-headed a great Guerilla movement in the provinces of Bengal and Bihar and Orissa, then suffering from an acute famine created by the evil-minded planters of the times. Many of the thousand upon thousands of starving souls provided cheap labour for these
planters, then having business across the seas in other continents. The Yogis are generally illiterate, but this did not prevent them to claim at least three to four thousand graduates of the University. They are sensitive, alert, active and maintain a good health with devoted loyalty towards the members of their sect. The present militant political group known as the Ananda-Märgis have Avadhůtas amongst their leadership, and as such are in the tradition of the redoubtable Nätha Saivas.

They worship no image; they worship living birds; and sometimes live fish; but never kill them; always these, after years, are released to a free life. They call their god Dharma, and the Dharma Yogi and the Nathas have all become one under the flag of the Nätha Saivas. There are many clans in Bengal with Nätha as their surname. And in most of these cases these are, or ought to be, Saivas.

Baba Gambhiranatha's headquarters in Tilla (Punjab) has become the headquarter for the North-Indian Näthas. One of the sons of Guru Nanak, Sri Cand, was honoured as an incarnation of Lord Siva; but his ways, the ways of the Udasis, as they are called, could only be called a branch of the Näthas and the Yogis. The whole of the lower Himalaya range, and specially the Western parts, are filled with temples and Caravansarais (Akhadas) dedicated in the name of the Nathas. Pilgrims could stay there without having to pay any charge. Gambhiranatha had been a great saint. These Nathas accept Kapila and Dattatreya as great path-finders, and pay them homage.

The liberalism of the Nätha cult, and its currency amongst the lower caste, made it popular with the Sahaja Vaisnavas. These in Bengal are known as Bäuls (mad men); and those of the thousands of the outcastes who were converted against their wishes

to
Islam, found in this cult a mid- way rest house, from where they could relate themselves to their dear tribal and Hindu gods and deities.

The Bauls form an endearing and adored community, like the Dervish, in Bengal, because of the treasure of their mystic songs. The Bauls' songs relate to Yoga and Sadhana, but use highly symbolic language, which are often full of witticisms and literary puzzles. These are invariably profound in character, and pacific by nature.

Natha cult is Saiva in its main trend. Its faith corresponds with Saivism and Tantra. Use of the Rudraksa (Elaeocarpus canitrus) beads for ornaments around the necks, the snake motif (keeping and training live snakes), drug-taking as a means of conserving 'Power', painting triple stripes of ashes across the forehead, the arms and the breast, lighting fire for Sadhana, using of a short crooked stick, bearing orange or ochre cotton cloths, wearing matted locks indicate their Saiva trends. In some cases these are excepted, but by and large, the Näthas are distinguished by these marks, as by their ear-rings.

The celebrated snake charmers of India, after these Nätha Yogis, live by intimate friendliness with the terrible venomous serpents, reptiles and scorpions as other wild pets like monkeys, mongoose, squirrels and iguanas. They are extremely popular amongst the village folks, to whom they sym- bolise living divine assistance, as they are the walking chest of the tradi- tional forest drugs and medicines which could cure many ailments of men and cattles. They make barrenness fertile, unwelcome pests vanish and social disgraces disappear. The popularity of the Nathas, almost super- stitious in its tenacity, is not based on looney moon-songs; they are realists; and they confront any mundane and human problem with the urgency and competence of a family member. Their power of maintain- ing the secrets of the various families is almost unassailable. They are feared, but also dearly wanted. They wield a force which is spiritually inspired.

Certain mystic ways are special to the Nathas. Brass bracelets; garlands known as Hinglaj and Asapuri (the first indicates a great Tantric Sakti-Sadhana-centre in Baluchistan; and the second means 'hope- fulfiller"); a garland named Seli, made of strings woven out of human hair, or sheep wool, with a black piece of horn attached to it, and known also as Pavitri (see notes) are imperative parts of their uniform. A Seli holds a small ring known as Pavitri, from which is hung the horn-made black piece known as Singh-Nada [Nada (sound) made of Horn; or the Roar of a lion]. This particular ring and loop is symbolic of the cause of creation.

Dariana, the name given to the ear-ring, must be made of the hide of a rhinoceros, Rhinoceros hide is considered highly sacred to the Natha Yogis who offer water to their deads from cups made of this hide, parti- cularly of the median horns (cf., Śräddha (i.e., crematory-offerings) Kända in Visnupurana where Rhino meat has been highly praised as offering to the dead). The Nathas pay a great importance to the Daršana rings; to lose it is a great disgrace, and communal humiliation almost immediately follows. In the olden times as a punishment for such carelessness the

offender used to be buried alive. They greet each other by the mystic word Adel which is a form derived from Adis, and means "Thou art the Brahman in form'.

The orthodox Hindus do not consider the Nätha, the Jugis (or Yogis), the Kanphattas, and others of these sects with acceptable esteem within their community and society. In community religious functions although these are served food along with the Vaisnava Bauls and Bairagis, and given priority of protocolic honour before other guests, yet, besides considering them as belonging to the great ocean of Hinduism and Saivas, they have not found any social acceptance. This is mainly due to some of their habits and forms. The heterodox methods adopted by the Nathas in performing their crematory rites keep them arms away from the orthodox. Although in conformity to the general Hindu stream of life they too touch fire on the lips of the dead, actually their dead are buried, seated with hands collected on the lap in the posture of a Yogi. (I am inclined to believe that this special trait could be traced to some pre- historic culture or alien practice now lost within the main stream. Such conjectures do knock at the gates of probability for admission to historical acceptance, but I could offer it no genuine ticket of authoritative mintage yet.) Whilst this, together with their non-acceptance of any imaged god, or for that matter, any god, except the abstract principle of Dharma have gone a long way to attract a number of Mussalmans back to the Hindu fold. These beliefs and acceptance of widowed females as yoga-partners from any of the classes have caused amongst the Brahmanical Hindus a good deal of resentment against them. Naturally, as dissidents and protestants they defiantly make little of the Brähmanical social order, and for their living they depend on any form of work, some of which is still considered very lowly, as the disposal of dead bodies, skinning dead animals, and tanning hides. Work, which in the Brahmanical order appears to be a stigma, and a sign of the underprivileged low caste, is to the Jugis and the Näthas an engagement of high esteem. They avoid begging. It is only now that these ideas are changing due to the rapid change of society under the pressure of industrialised urbanity and development of city slums.

The Yogis and the Nathas are always considered highly as pedlars of medicinal herbs, tamers of serpents, and actual skilled performers or miracles. Their powers in these fields are accepted without a challenge and people dare not offend them at all. Wherever they move, they are held in more awe than in any loving regard.

The greatest festival for the Näthas is, of course, Šivaratri, held in Caitra (March-April), followed by a great festival known as Neel. They assemble at a given traditional centre, and call the assembly as Gajan, and take part in self-excruciating performances known as Caraka.

"Amongst non-Bengali Gorakh-panthi Yogis, however, Siva has probably less to do, and the Saiva element of the religion may have come from Matsyendranatha, alleged to be the Guru of Gorakṣanatha. In. fact, strong Vaisnava association in Western India, Buddhistic associations in Nepal and Eastern India, and even Islamic touches in isolated cases make up the complicated texture of the widely spread Nätha cult. Sakta elements are naturally and strongly represented, as the list of places of pilgrimage shows. The cult had never been seriously theistic. The illusive and tangible supreme Being, who is manifested in the universe created out of Him, is called by the epithet Niranjana (speckless), Śünya (void), Anadi (beginningless), Adinatha (primal Lord), etc. The story of the beginning of the creation according to the Nätha cult, shows. remarkable affinity with the Rg Vedic Hymn of Creation, 17 and the open- ing lines of the Manu Samhita. Before the beginning of creation there was all compassing darkness and void. The impulse if creation made a ripple on the void, resulting in a bubble and an egg. This was hatched, and out of it came the primal God.18 The egg shells formed the upper and the lower limits of the Universe." From the seat of Adinatha was born his alter-ego Ketaka or Manaša. The gods Brahma, Viṇṇu and Śiva came out of her without any physical efforts on her part. Brahma sprang out of her mouth, Visnu from her forehead; but Siva proved to be more practical, and came out of the source from out of which all beings born issue forth. These three had to keep on the work of creation going. But hearing that their father had gone for penance on the banks of the

Balluka they too like the four sons of Brahma (Sanaka, Sanandana, Sanatana, Sanatkumāra) went for penancing at the same place without having the least desire to get engaged with the business of procreation. Adinatha wanted to test the boys as well as the degree of non-attachment they had mastered. He floated himself down the river as a rotten decom- posing cadavar. The smell made Brahma take to his heels; Visnu waived away the smell, but did nothing more. Only Śiva recognised the father-cadavar, and having secured it, cremated it. The five cardinal saints of the cult were products of the resultant ashes of Adinatha. These are: Mina, Gorakṣa, Hadi-Pa, and Caurangee.

The boys did not want to get engaged in reproduction, which Śiva's consort Gauri (the White goddess?) did not approve. In order to make their minds change Gauri herself began to play with the boys in a manner which convinced them about the charms of the female. Minanatha went to the country of the Rambhas (Kadali in Bengali), the proverbial nymphs; Häḍi-På took to Mayanamati; Känu-Pä was engaged with Dahuka; and the one known as Sisupä (Caurangee) had his step mother for a consort. Gorakṣanatha alone remained unmoved by any such charms. Gauri, thus rebuffed, stooped to means which a mother need not have taken to induce a son to embrace a marriage vow. But not only did Goraksa resist, in fact Gauri was humiliated by his Yogic counterpowers, specially when she had reluctantly adopted informal devices to bring him to a nuptial bed. Siva intervened, and saved Gauri from a thorough disgrace, by making Gorakṣanatha marry a girl equally saintly and austere. What would Goraksanatha do now? To go the way of all flesh?

Comes the nuptial night. The bride enters well-decked. Instead of an expectant husband she finds on her bed an infant howling and scream- ing for a breast feed! The bride, a saint herself, stood aghast and bemused. Though a saint, her womanly pride was touched to the quick. She took a deep breath, held the child, and put his screaming

mouth where it craved to be. Gorakṣanatha now came to himself. Now started the illuminating discourse between the two Parent-figures of the cult.

"I am neither a female nor a male; just a driftwood (the same words as in the Svetasvatara Upanisad IV: 3), What value sensibilities? What worth reactions?"
Yes; all that was true, the girl knew; but what about the continuity of life? If bad, it should be bad for all. What was the solution to the riddle of creation and continuity? Is Siva wrong? Does marriage of saints means spread of barrenness and undoing nature's purpose? It is clear that the Näthas were out to spring a surprise on the negative and decadent Buddhist canons. Goraksa stood bewildered. Siva intervened; and through His aid she received a piece of cloth: She had a drink of milk, in which a piece of Siva's loin cloth was allowed to soak; and this drink resulted in the birth of Karpatti Nätha (Karpatti meaning 'a piece of loin cloth). Gorakṣanátha then freed from his responsibility retired to his abode of penance in Vijayanagar. (The Vedic injunction of 'Let not the thread break' was respected thus by the Nathas. Life was to continue).

The Nätha literature is pretty expansive; and great commentators have worked on them. The historicity of the Nätha Gurus is established through these works. A study of these works leaves no doubt that to the Nathas doctrinal postulates the Vajrayana and Tantric Mahayana systems had contributed much of their esotericism and eschatology. The Yogic rites of the Näthas is a conglomeration of Patanjali, Väda- rayana, Mahāyāna, Dattatreya Avadhuta rites and Aghora Tantric rites. Hatha Yoga and Käyä Sadhana along with Sunya-vada and Sunya Sadhana also found a place in these works, due to which some of the ways of the Nathas were respected, even by Islamic mystics.

Matsyendra Nätha was identified with Avalokitesvara of the Tibetan Mahāyāna Buddhists. Cordier's catalogue of Tibetan manuscript mentions Sanskrt treatises by Jalandhari Hädi-Pä on Tantric Buddhism. Känu-På has been recognised by some as Käpälika Yogi. One of his poems says:

O Dombi (Hide-hunting girl), you sell guts and wicker baskets: yet for your sake I have abandoned my life as a roving ascetic. You are a Dome-lass; whilst I am a Käpälika, yet to be fascinating to you I have decorated myself with bone-necklaces.

Sex and the Näthas

The question arises how would one associate human lust, or even sexual union as a spiritual exercise? The question is pertinent and quite understandable, specially to the slaves of forms and traditions, beings who unknown to themselves have got themselves imprisoned within their preconceived notions and dogma, or who have got themselves brainwashed by centuries of hypocrisy. An unrealistic forced celebacy as a religious fetish has done untold harms to moral institutions. Dr. Ananda Coomaraswamy has written a paper on the cult of Sahaja, one of the cultish fraternities of the Näthas. One of their architects, Candi-dās, a Vaisnava and a Baul has bemoaned, "The world cries 'Sahaja and Sahaja! Which of them knows what Sahaja really means?" So that we at least, do, let us quote from Dr. Coomaraswamy:

The last achievement of all thought is a recognition of the identity of spirit and matter, subject and object; and this re-union is the marriage of heaven and hell, the reaching out of a contracted uni- verse towards its freedom, in response to the laws of Eternity for the production of Time. There is then no sacred or profane, spiri- tual or sensual, but everything that lives is pure and void. This very world of birth and death is also the great abyss.

In India we could not escape the conviction that sexual love has a deep and spiritual significance. There is nothing with which we can better compare the mystic union of the finite with its infinite ambient-that one experience which proves itself and is the only ground of faith-than a self-oblivion of earthly lovers lost in each other's arms, where 'each is both'. Physical proximity, contact and interpenetration are the expressions of love, only because love is the recognition of identity. These two are one flesh because they have remembered their unity of spirit. This is moreover a fuller

identity than the mere sympathy of two individuals; and each as individual has now no more significance for the outer than the gates of heaven for one who stands within. It is an algebraic equa-tion where the equation is the only truth, and the terms may stand for anything. The least intrusion of the ego, however, involves a return to the illusion of duality.

This vision of the beloved has no necessary relation to empirical reality. The beloved may be in every ethical sense of the word unworthy and the consequence of this may be socially or ethically disastrous; but nevertheless the eye of love perceives her divine perfection and infinity, and is not deceived. That one is chosen by the other is therefore no occasion of pride for the same perfection and infinity is present in every grain of sand, and in the rain drop as much as in sea.

To carry through such a relationship, however, and to reach a goal, to really progress and not merely to achieve on intimation- for this it is necessary that both the lover and the beloved should be of one and same spiritual age and of the same moral fibre. For if not, as Candidas says the woman who loves an unworthy man would share the fate of the flower that is pierced with thorns; she will die of a broken heart; and the youth who falls in love with a woman of lower spiritual degree will be tossed to and fro in great unrest, and give way to despair.170

St. Theresa, explaining Union, has said that one in union must never refuse anything. Everything, when and if demanded, is His or Hers. Refuse nothing; and yet one must not 'fall'. How could this be achieved? Kissing a hungry tiger? Testing the sharpness of dagger by passing the tongue over it? To make a bed of flames and sleep comfortably? Who did ever hear of this? The Sahaja lovers did.

Sacrifice all you have; yes, all; but outwardly remain indifferent. No, do not dramatise. This is exactly how it should be. Do not hang upon, dote and lave upon. Seek, seek and ever seek to extract the last aroma of the essence; the last atom of rays from the globe of love; but only in essence. The crude is just the medium for achieving that essence; but the essence is what is sought. Are you thirsty? Then take the jump; and swim. But

it is salt water. No drinking now. It would only add to the thirst, and lead to death. Swim; but do not drink; until you reach sweet water. One day you shall. It is better to perish in the quest of the Sublime, than to survive on fake and dirt. Sounding romantic? Sound- ing idealistic? Listen to what Kuprin, the Russian says: "So far as love is concerned, I tell you that even this has its cliffs which one out of a million is able to climb!"171

What is this spiritualism? The Western hedonist impatiently asks. This kind of salvation has been described. "It is a release from the ego and from becoming: it is the realisation of the Self, and of entity- "where nothing of ourselves is left in us'. This perfect state must be one without desire, because desire implies a lack.17 Ego eludes, and drives will from behind. The ego-less performs the same act, but makes will drive the ego, if necessary, by driving ego out! Action then is inaction.

Then and then only is the lover free-when he is free from willing. He who is free is free to do what he will,-but first, as Nietzsche says, he must be such as can will; or as Rumi expresses it, must have surrendered will. This by no means is the same as to do what one likes, or to avoid what one does not like, for he is very far from free who is subject to the caprices of the ego,178

Must we then have always a recourse to sexual intercourse, and must freedom be dependent on the association of a woman? Is it playing with fire, and living in the same cage with a tigress, and serpent? Yes; and No! It depends on temperament; the aspirant's make up, breeding, psyche, rhythms, ever which even your embryonic pre-natal self, even as much as the last picture seen in the theatre has exerted their unnoticed but tremendous influence. Why must we hold the brief for this way or the other? Sahaja is the way. It has produced great saints, free souls. It has produced world-figures to whom millions have paid homage. We cannot explain anything. We are not to justify. We try to analyse the events and the facts as they are. Adultery is not a crime of the bed alone. The adulterer commits a thousand fornications even with his bare eyes, his lusty mind, his colourful and famished desires. To embrace a woman

without any desire is not necessarily moral, if anything, it could be hypocritical, or worse, pathological. Gitä says, "See action in inaction, and inaction in action; then alone you know of action. The really perfect man of action has to act like a Yogi." Gitä hints at an active life; but the driving force must not be desire. When you are at it, you are at it; and it must be acted upon perfectly; for the time of the act you have only one duty, that is to act perfectly and to the best of your ability. No other desire, other than the perfection of attainment, should motivate your action. This would explain why to be spiritual is not to be a dud towards the sensitive world. To be opaque or neutral is to be dead to Will. Senses are there to function. Their functioning is one's duty; God-given charge. The body is a God-made machine, and its functionalism must remain actively sensitive and apt, as it is neither godly, nor human to remain irresponsive to a charge laid down by God. To be spiritual is not to be insensitive. A spiritualist actually feels more than the common type can; he hears more than others do, and so on for every organ. The spiritualist is only keener. He is much more sensitive. Whereas the common indivi- dual is an ordinary radio set, and receives this or that station, the spiritualist is an oversensitive seismograph recording the remotest, subtlest break in equipoise in the unfathomed regions of the ethereal, cosmic space, and outer space.

His embraces are morally, spiritually, consummately more total, more engrossing, more absorbing, more aware of a glory that is unattainable within the limit of the bodies alone. "It is easy not to walk; but we have to walk without touching grounds"

The Western attitude towards sex, and the type of freedom it advocates and then cultivates is demonstrative of its age-long fascination for material- ism and inclination for hedonism, which has brought upon a potentially prosperous society the stifling cramps of an extreme form of misanthropy and cynicism. This callous disregard for human values in preference to the childish game and pursuit for acquisitiveness is being cultivated at the cost of the freedom and happiness of the millions of the dispossessed. This sort of sexual freedom is typical of a generation in panic, and driven to be on the run; and naturally, and helplessly this harassed generation strives to grab and secure as early as possible, and as much as possible, by any means possible, for

the means have nothing to do with the ends. For them it is now, or never; for the spiritualists it is for ever and ever.

Sahaja has nothing to do with this kind of Hedonism, or with this kind of epicureanistic decadence of faith and human love. The doctrine of non-pursuit as advocated by Tao has to be fundamentally grasped before Sahaja is understood and appreciated. Only the timid, the coward, the insecure would avoid the issue by calling it idealistic.

Those whose view of life is exclusively ethical, will hold that sexual intimacy must be sanctified, justified, or expiated by at least the wish to beget or to accept the consequent responsibilities of parenthood. There is indeed something inappropriate in
the position of those who pursue the pleasures of life, and veade by artificial means their natural fruit. But his point of view pre- supposes that the sexual intimacy was a sought pleasure; what we have discussed is something quite other than this, and without an element of seeking,174

3. Siddhas (Mahesvaras)

Some esoteric yogic practices have been as ancient as the hills. In a compounded way, these are given a package deal under the term Tantricism. The controversy whether Tantra and Tantricism is Vedic or not appears to be, against the light of the enquiry at issue, quite academic. The fact is that the tribal cultish practices in India, living side by side with many other sophisticated trends, have syncretically created their own heritage; and today it is easy to find the traces of the one in the practices of the other. This is due to the basic catholicity which the land and Mind of India has bestowed on almost all of its inhabitants. The Indians are more conservative of their social frame-work than of their religious opinions.

The chief distinction between Tantra and Tantric rites lies in their emphasis on the practical side of the Sädhanäitself than on the speculative casuistry of mere

theorisations. This is evidenced by the fact that most of the Tantric books record the know-how more than why-s and how-s.

In understanding Tantra and Tantric rites we must first of all distinguish between body culture (Kaya Sadhana) and physical culture. The latter is but an expression of developing the athlete's prowess; whilst the former aims at developing the spiritualist's Power of Will, and through it the scope for the generation of a special Power which electrifies Consciousness, and organises Skill. Tantra concerns itself with Käyä Sadhana for the purpose of empowering the Will, or to state it more precisely, to extract from within the utmost power of Will, and make it work for a World-good. This power of Consciousness resides within the Body; and the realisation of this Power depends on securing a perfect control over the body, which is but a medium.

When I am united to my alter-ego, physically, I am not so aware of the mademoiselle or the madam, of Rani, or Roma, or Jane, or Judith, but I am, and must be, fully aware of the bodyless, timeless, eternity of Joy which creates and uncreates the thrill which acts as the Matrix of the unnumbered planets and stars or as the miracle of the sonic pheno- menon and the Sublimity of the Spirit of all Beings.

Then and then alone I shall have invoked, aroused and assimilated that cosmic thrill for which all spiritualists crave, and about which the sensualists are as ignorant as a snail is about the charms of a rainbow.

This might sound as idealistic, vague, or even worse, romantic. But the Tantrics believe this to be the truth, the Power that be; the Power that alone is conscious; the Power which is called by Patanjali as Visoka Jyotismati (a luminous cognition free of sorrow).177 It is not an abstract principle; it is more alive. It is Power itself. It is immanent in the Universe; immanent in the Body; immanent in the microcosm giving it a logical support for becoming immanent in the macrocosm. It is Sakti. This is what the Hatha Yogis strive to unleash, and attain liberation in ecstasy. And without attaining personal liberation, no one could aspire to liberate others. Within the body itself are deeply laid the roots of this awakening. It is the upturned Pipal tree, to know

the mystery of which is to arrive at the heart of the Truth. Thus the body is the great organ out of which peal after peal of celestial music, the Näda, would flow over, and saturate the universe. This is the greatest support for the Käyä-Sadhana recommended in the Hatha-Yoga system. This is Tantric because of the aim, not because of the means. If the other systems of Tantra advocate in favour of the Cakras, the Lotuses or the Kundalini, they mean well; it is not the means that matters at all; all sects and branches of Tantra aim at reaching the same source of Power and Power alone.

This difference of means has given to the esoteric world of the Hindus the many Tantric sects. These are: the Mahäyäna, the Vajrayana, the Vaisnava-Sahaja and the various other Tantric echoes, inclusive of some Jaina schools. These form a pack together by virtue of their common daring and firm courage to base their practice on sexo-yogic plans. From our previous studies on Tantra and its relation to matriarchy we know that basically all forms of Tantra to be genuine must not shrink from daring even the sexo-genic practices. In this trend no Tantra of no country or culture, recent or ancient, sought an escape. They called it Serpent Power, and symbolised it with a serpent motif, only because it was as dangerous as playing with the tempers of a hydra-headed serpent. The Hindus worship the idea of Krsna dancing on the hood of such a monster, and even finding in the process a sportive mood so that he could play on his flute. It conveys the added significance of the Yogi's extreme ease and grace in the Liberated state, when he is rhythmically attuned with the world of cosmic sonance, the Näda. The popularity of the serpent motif in all the religions of the world, ancient and modern, is proverbial. This is the basis of Saivism. Śiva is worshipped as a State, charac-

teristically static

and negative. Śiva is the Sleeping One. This is only one of the conceptual forms. There is yet another form. This Śiva is worshipped with Sakti. She is dynamic and energetic; she is the Power that is not only conscious, but also the urge that by impregnating herself bursts into many, and fills the created phenomena with whirls of actions and motions, which like a perpetual wheel, keeps on rolling and rolling, spinning and

spinning. To control that, is to reach the centre of this, acti- vity, and thereby to reach at the bottom of the mystery of this duality, and find that in real coitus the two become one and only one. The two seek to be One.

The first of the processes suggests Sadhana along the Nivrtti Märga, the way of abstinence; and the second, of Tantra, suggests the way of inducements and impulses, i.e., the Pravetti Märga. Śaivism follows both the ways; or it would be more fair to say that Saivism contains both. What it does definitely not contain is the phallistic excesses of erotic debauches, which have been carried on everlastingly, at every turn of human civilisation, under one or another pretext. Whenever culture has been overstrained with urbanity, military power, or material glut, or all the three combined, religion has been reduced to a mockery, morality to a mask, and sex-orgies to a vogue. It is a tragedy that, as with learning. so with power, ultimately an excess in either has led to misconceptions, and growth of cynicism. Cynicism is the price intellectual thinking pays to indiscriminate and unbalanced materialistic excess.

How could we ever escape the duality of the source of manifestation? How could we escape the fact that true neutrality must counterbalance two opposites? Within the body itself run the two counter forces, one unmindful of the other, and create confusions, tensions and sorrows. Idd and Pingald being under control, Susumand gets the chance of awakening and acts in a manner which only fools would call miracles.

Pre-Buddhist Tantra and the Three Siddhas

Long after the death of Buddha, when the wheel of Dhamma and Sangha was moving at a much slower pace, it came to face a gigantic con- frontation with the monolithic Hindu society. The Hindu society before Buddha had very little in common with the Hindu society after the Buddhistic flood. History does not turn back; and the new society had left behind the old definitions of Varna and Asrama; the Aranyaka society and the Upäsanä form had forever gone into the dark chambers of history. Yet when the heyday of Buddhism, and the Buddhist princes were over, when the laws of the

land did no longer provide a privileged protection to the Dhamma of the common man, when the neo-Hindu re- generation surged up once again, the leviathan of Hinduism started to gobble up the Dhamma of the great Lion-hearted Buddha. Yet so power- ful and cogent were the ways of the Buddha, it became impossible to efface the glory of his influence entirely. Although we hear of persecu- tions and destructions of both Hindu and Buddhistic institutions during this period of cultural upheaval, basically, due to the very nature of the people concerned, belligerency was restricted within human limits, and forced-conversions were neither countenanced nor condoned. The tole- rant Hindu accepted the spirit of give and take. Thus came the mixtures which resulted in the various Tantric Sädhaná-forms, which became of their heterodoxical rejection of the caste institutions had to be accom- modated under the heterodoxic god

Śiva, the classical challenger of the Deva-purism and aristocracy.

Thus evolved the various Tantric sects, most of which tend to expose the Buddhistic undertones, and overtones of local, and in certain special cases, alien practices. Like the Sahajas and the Näthas the Sufis of India, when these appeared in history, illustrated the peculiarities of the Kaya-Sadhand, the Bodhi leading to ultimate liberation; they along with the Siddhas of old, adhered to the principles of the void and Nada. A philo. sophy like the monistic Trika could not have grown in any other part of India, but in Kashmir where several cultural trends met in a common borderland. It was there that scholars like Abhinavagupta advocated the exquisite pragmatism of Tantra and Vedanta, Šaivism and Śaktism. The theory of Andhata-Yoga involved Muslims of the royal blood like Dara Shikoh, the great Mughal Prince and Scholar, as well as the saint Mansur Halaj, who was executed, like Dara Shikoh, under the pressures of the in- sistence of the diehard Muslim Divines. His only crime was that he said, 'I and He are one'.

4. Raseśvaras

The Siddhas have been mentioned already. There is yet another minor sect who are considered amongst the Saivas. That Siva has been fond of the Siddhas and the

Caranas has been mentioned throughout the Puranas. The Siddhas, like the Gandharvas, Kinnaras and Caranas were fond of music and dance. This was decidedly one of the usual forms of their religious pursuits. They are the Raseśvara Siddhas, Mäheśvara Siddhas and, of course, the Nätha Siddhas.

We pay Nature's debts by relinquishing this body to Nature. That payment effaces our chief means of identity; and we know this payment is to be made through the counter of death. The common idea of death makes Life face a blind wall. Any further progress of the Life-Force has not found favour with many doctrinaire religions.

Our world is made to move around us. With our birth it is born to our awareness; and with our death it is claimed to be dead to our aware- ness. There appears to be a basic lack of sense in such a concept of Life and Death. But our total engrossment with the self deludes us to think wrongly, and our ego and predispositions as well as commitments make us refuse to see that wrong is wrong. Of such stuff is dogma made: and one could cry a slogan, 'No dogma, no religion'. This indeed is a tragedy. Maya is suffering.

Siddhas need not put any trust in the view that a Yogi like the Christ had died in torture and agony on the cross. Instead they would fully corroborate the fact the Christ had experienced the Ascension, and conti- nued to live, only to reappear when he himself would feel that the opportune moment for such a descent has arrived. For this none need play with any theory of astral body and so forth; the Siddhas go further. They believe that levitation is just a matter of practice, and so is the fact of continuing with the life-span everlastingly, by learning the art of getting the body cells to get changed at Will from time to time, without leaving the process to the automatic mechanical process of the body's law. For the Siddhas of India the theory of returning dust unto dust, debitum nature, did not hold much water. There are hard core similarities between the mysticism of the Siddhas, the Avadhutas of the Dattatreya cult, the Essines, the practices of John the Baptist and the training, proclamation, penances and disappearance of Jesus.179

This strong belief has led the Yogis to seek two kinds of liberation: (a) a liberated state through which the body's tyranny could be bypassed, and living in the conscious-world alone becomes possible. This is Jivan- mukti, or liberation whilst 'in life'. This we have heard of in the Siddhäntas and Patanjali. This could spare a spiritual saint from a spiral of birth; but this cannot spare him from another death. For that he has to wait for Paramukti. (b) Parämukti has to be explained. This life itself is a battleground; the prize is liberation. In this very life a liberated existence is possible; but that does not prepare a person or a soul for the perpetual enjoyment of a bodyless joy, when neither birth, nor death could put him to test, or involve him. The Siddhas claim that this life is only a preparation for that. After relinquishing the body, or the other side of the body-world, when life still remains a continuous process, but is no longer burdened with the claims of the body, then and then alone the Yogi could strive for the perfect cosmic release known as Parämukti. The Mukta, or the perfectly liberated, is a deathless Monad into which his spiritual and physical personalities have found a peaceful abode. When he is in this state, he completely disappears in Space, and he ceases to be an identity. He becomes integrated with the Cosmos. He become It: no longer He, or She. This is Sivată.

This is possible through the two principles described before: Suddha Maya, and Asuddha Maya, or Para Siva and Sada Siva. The bodies are constituted of impure matter. The spiritual practices purify the impuri- ties, and the body makes a special grade of lighter existence when it is only conscious of pure matter. The yogic exercise and the Will-force together aids in transforming the one into the other, and thereby stop corruption to the spiritual self. Whatever is impure must corrupt; the impure alone is free from corruption. Purity does not undergo a change. The purest pure alone could be received into the Pure and the Immaculate. As long as impurity harasses in the least, body after body has to bear the load of this impurity which is conveyed even through the subtle state of identity through the media of desires and unfulfilled wishes. These agitate the subtle being, and cause a momentum, a pull, a weight. Thus every- time

bodyless spirit attempts to free itself totally, and rises to the purer regions of the corruption-free, it fails, and is dropped back like a wrongly addressed letter, or a bad coin in an automatic telephone booth. Once the state of impurity is perfectly cleared of the impure and heavy stuff, there is no more coming to the body; the next state is an unending pure and immaculate bliss. Now the Body is Om; and thus is called the Pranava- Tanu. As the great Pranava-Tanu attains its maturity, body falls off like a matured leaf, or like the old skin off a serpent's body, when it enters into a new season lying ahead. If a Yogi is born with trails of Jivanmukti, he leaves body very early in

order to reach his Parămukti state. Death occurs early in life, and release comes early to the Jivan- mukta. "Those loved by God, die young" is not an adage without some basis.

The Siddhas in this way grade the Linga-Sarira, the Subtle Body, into Pranava-Tanu, Jnana-Tanu and Mantra-Tanu. Pranava-Tanu refers to the body consisting of the sacred formula alone. The 'body' in this last category is resonant with the implications of the Mantra alone. It bears the living Mantra in the living body; and the Mantra is the Body. At this state the body is only the subtlety of the Mantra, the sacred syllable, and free from all impurities. Now it could enter the Immense Immacu- late. What was an identity, in a flash becomes, or is transformed into a Divya-Tanu, an illumined spirit-body, (celestial body) beyond the vision of an ordinary man. Thus the Suddha grading from Pranava- Tanu, to Jnana-Tanu, to Mantra-Tanu finally reaches Divya-Tanu. The legendary and mystic angels, the aerial spirits do not appear to be entirely legendary after all. This is a mystic explanation for this habitation.

Students of Plotinus and Origen, familiar with the distinction between Nous and Soul, with the Athanasian Nicene creed would discover for themselves the similarities between the Siddha-gradations in spiritual attainments and the Athanasian gradations.

If this is strictly followed and understood, it is not difficult to see how the Jivanmukta, in a state of Jnana-Tanu or Mantra-Tanu could continue to exist for his personal penance or personal benedictions as long as he chooses. Death becomes a tenant of

the

Will, and has to wait the pleasure of the body, which is refamished again and again from the stock of pure matter and which avoids meticulously all contacts with impurities.

The Siddha law of transmigration is complex; but it is very widely adhered to by the Saivas, who honour the Siddhas as the greatest of the Gurus. This has given the Saivas the special sect of the Natha Siddhas of whom we have already spoken. But we have yet to speak of the Mäheśvara Siddhas,

5. Mäheśvaras

The group of the Yogis, unlike the Näthas, are mainly related to the southern-most parts of the Indian peninsula. The Agamic Śaivism has supplied this sect with the fountain-head for their inspiration. The entire movement spins around a council of eighteen saints known as the Astadasa Siddhācāryas. Of the 18, the great 'Four' belong to the Tamil Agamic apostolic tradition! Māṇikkavacaka, Vägisa or Appar, Jnanasambandha and Sundara. While these belong to the Bhakti Märga, the remaining fourteen belong to the tradition of Suddha Marga (Pure Way) of the Jñana Siddhas (Spiritualists of Realised knowledge).

Śrimülakantha, simply known as Mular, says that he, along with the seven ancient teachers had received Mäheśvara training directly from the "heaven'. The Mäheśvaras were known for their Athanasian discipline, for which the great Egyptian saint Athanasius, in spite of his differences with the orthodox creed, enacted by the Emperor Constantine himself, was re- garded throughout his long life as an inviolable apostle of spiritual purity. Arianism and Origenism found their headquarters in Egypt, where spiritualism was regarded with solemn seriousness. Commerce between the Red Sea and Tamil-land and Ceylon was pretty brisk in those days as now; and the two countries, equally keen about spiritual enquiries and regidity of practice could easily have shared their disciplinary codes and formulae.

Mular claims seven of the famous Siddhas: Malanka, Indra, Soma, Rudra, Kälägni and Kamaścală, to have been his disciples. That he had learned much of his techniques from the Nätha Siddhas, and that he himself had spent a long time in the Himalayas and Tibet, has been mentioned by him. Bhoga, a Chinese Taoist, had brought with him a learned man, Pulippari, from China to India. Traditionally it is accepted that this Bhoga, the Chinese-Taoist, had been a contemporary of the sage Agastya. About Agastya's great miracles the Puränas are eloquent. He too appears to have been a Suddha-Märga Maheśvara Siddha. He belonged to the Trans-Himalayan North, and came to the South for preaching the Siva Dharma in replacement of the Surya Dharma. This has been related in the various legends of the epics as well of the Puranas. The Tirunelvelli district of South India claims to have provided him with his favourite home. He, in flesh, is supposed to have conquered over the fact of physical transformation caused by death. The Tirunel- velli people still believe that Agastya, though unperceived by the mortal eyes, is still alive, and moves in the same locality. Mallikädeva or Mallikanatha was of Säkta Agamic leanings. He had founded a monastic order. He, and another Siva-Agamic saint, Garbhapûrîşa (Kururvirara), infused a great spirit of discipline amongst the inmate of the monastery which exists to this day. In purity and austerity of discipline this parti- cular sect, and the Athanasians of Egypt, vouch and evince practices too similar to be regarded as two indigenous and independent schools. The Maheśvaras, and particularly the member of the latter orders, are reputed for raising the dead to life. (It is interesting to note that in the incident of raising to life the dead son of his Guru Sandipani, described in the Bhaga- vatam, Harivamia and Visnupurana, Krsna was asked to tackle a demon who lived 'across' or 'in' the Sea!) Garbhapurisa himself used to revive the dead; until finally, before the sight of all, he himself disappeared180

Through a beautifully narrated legend the Maheśvara Siddhas justify their way of life and doctrines by bringing out the point that the truth of the Vedas has been better preserved through the Nigamas.

The Vedas found themselves too harassed by the ups and downs of history, and through the perfidy of man. They decide to live as trees in a forest, and settled in the Nigamavana, a name that both Periplus and Ptolemy mention. (Incidentally, this again evidences an Egyptian link.) Here settles the Navakoti (90,000,000) Siddhas. They sport on the beaches of the Navakoti Siddhasrama. The Sacred white banyan tree found in this place, which is supposed to offer shade to the Siddhas, is not visible to the impure of soul. Near about is Agastyasrama, the abode of Rsi Agastya, the leading saint of the Siddhas. The place is full of the tales about miracles, specially of Vagisa and Jñanasambandha, the two famous Siddhas whose acts have assumed through the passing centuries legendary proportions. That the Agamic truths are in conformity with the Vedas is the point at issue underlying the allegory. This again is an extra effort evinced to get the Agamas identified with the Vedas. The question arises again, was then Agama (ie., that which came in) some such alien tradition which found refuge in India? Or was it the reply given to an imposing Vedic culture by an indigenous pre-Vedic Indian culture? The greatest of these miracles, however, related to the acts of transforma- tion of the physical into the spiritual, and vice versa. Through this means the worldly could arrive very close to the heavenly. This is the final goal of the Siddhas, and of the Siddhanta. It is still regarded as a Rahasya (mystery). Through the same legendary technique the Mäheśvaras relate them to the age-honoured names of the four stalwart holy of holies amongst the spiritualists of the Hindu Myths: Sanaka, Sanandana, Sanatana and Sanatkumára. These later on inspired the Sri-Vaisnavas with the Idea of the Four Vyúhas. These Vaisnava Vyúhas are: Baladeva, Krsna, Pradyumna and Aniruddha.

The Kaladahana Tantra of Kamikagama, Sivajñāna-dipa, Suddha- sadhaka and Mṛtyunasaka Tantra are the accepted literature of the sect which, however, did not find favour with the orthodox Saivaites. We have referred to the spite with which the Saivaites looked upon the Mäheśvaras. This could have due to the preponderance of the element of magic and the occult present in the cult. It is believed that the King

Ravana of Lanka (Ceylon) and his son Meghanada used to follow this doctrine. It is remarkable that Ravana who was a Saiva was defeated by Karta- viryarjuna of Mähismati, another Saiva. It indicates that one form of Saivism really and actually abhorred another form, and desired to defeat each other's cause. It also confirms the presence of the practice of the Tantric forms of Saivism amongst the royalties, nobilities and aristocracy. The Brahmajabala Upanisad is claimed to be later work. It contains much of the mystic doctrines of the Athanasian school of translation of bodies

(as in Samkarācārya's case), and transfiguration. This Upanisad is said to contain the most valued doctrines of the Siddhas of this order. Similar claims have been laid on some other Upanisads, which have been divided into four groups, each being described as the post-script of the Vedas. There are yet some mystic treatises which contain some of the most secret and intimate techniques of sorteriological value. These are Atharvasiras, Atharvasikha, Garuda, Siddhagana and Kalagnirudra, named signs of the highest occult power of these Saivas who have continued to demand the greatest awe and regard from the common mass. In the twelve yearly congregation at the Kumbha Mela, where all the religious orders of the Hindus assemble, the prime of the place is still kept open to the Nathas and the Siddhas, popularly called the Udasis.

6. Vaikhanasas and the Pañcaratras

Speaking in the accepted sectarian classification these sects do not fall under the category of the Saivas. These are considered under the Vaisnavas, and these are the two of the most important sects to have influenced Hindu ritualism the most. Because of their authentic contri- bution to the ritualistic form of Bhakti, we are obliged to examine their ways as the chief architects of rites of the Bhakti-system.

The Bhagavatas include the Siva rites and the Visnu rites as important sister forms. Dr. K. M. Sen of Santiniketan actually believes that the entire system of Hindu rites is a contribution of the Sri Vaisnavas and the Vaikhänasas, 181

The great tradition of the temple rites, image-attendance, the observances of the special days and special offerings, and the priestly codes has been a contribution of the Vaikhanasas. A study of this influential group permits us to take a look into the secrets of these forms.

Like almost every other religious sect in India the Vaikhänasas too relate their growth to the usual immemorial past, going as far back as Brahma himself. Because it grew as a Vaisnava sect, it was also obliged to relate itself to Visnu. Thus Vaikhanasa, a great sage, was supposed to have been an incarnation of Brahma. He was supposed to have been taught by Lord Visnu himself in the art of offering worship to the image form of Visnu and to introduce the image in a temple. Elaborate advice and injunctions have been laid down in the Vaikhänasa treatises on the manner and other minutest details

of
worship, because worship and wor- ship alone was supposed to precede the mood of
complete dedication to the Lord. In making these offerings in the form of this worship the Vai- khānasas have to relate the requirements of the Lord to those of the formed beings, up to its minutest detail, and not to fail to provide for any of the demands, whether ordinary, or extraordinary. The advent of the Vaikhanasas, apart from, and in addition to the other sages of old, became imperative, because of specific purpose it served, which was to organise the worship of the Lord. Arca (as different from Upasana) of Visnu is the principal outlook of the Vaikhanasas.

We shall see that with the passage of time the Vaisnavas had split into two main sections: the Vaikhanasas, with their headquarters in the Venkatesvara temple of Bäläji in Thirupati in the Tamil-land, and the Sri Vaisnavas with their headquarters at Tiruchirapalli, the temple of Śri Ranganathaswami. Ultimately the Śri Vaisnavas, under the dynamic intellectual leadership of Rämänuja succeeded in wrenching from the Vaikhanasas their pristine leadership in temple worship; but it should also be borne in mind that in the actual act of worship, irrespective of the leadership, even today the Vaikhanasas, and no other, are regarded as to have the sole right of direct contact with the sanctum sanctuary and the image itself. Although the Sri Vaisnavas happen to be in

charge of the managements of most of the temples, the Vaikhanasas alone conduct the actual worship and the prayers.

This should be made further clear. The growth and development of the Sri-Vaisnavas has been fantastically rapid and total. The personal- ity and devotion of Rämänujācārya, his devotional and spiritual impact had been able to take over from every other sect the leadership for the Vaisnavas, finally and most convincingly. There was no acrimony, bloodshed, fight or war. The transfer of leadership was effected by the intellectual acumen of Ramanuja, which had almost dislodged the monistic Vedantism of Samkarācārya, looked upon as a back-door admission of Buddhism, from popular affection. The southern peninsula of India was at that time divided into a number of kingdoms ruled by various powerful ruler. Each one of them vied with the other in expansionism, in which the emphasis on the religious forms, with the support of an influential Guru, came most handy. Each King appeared to have his patron saint; and chief minister, or very much like one. All of these Kings were made to grant huge property rites and holdings dedicated to the patron saint and his temple. These properties had their own system of management and administration, which continue to this day. Kings have been dislodged by an independent India; but neither the priests, nor their property-rights carried in the name of the deities. The common man, so educated, following the lead from the royalties made tremendous sacrifices in making their utmost offerings to their beloved deities.

The way these deities 'lived' within their temples proved to be much more lavish than the ways of the royalties. Their temples were destined to be the treasury of the nation in terms of gold, jewellery and precious stones. Temples of gold, supported on golden pillars were not uncommon in those days, and are not totally absent even now. It could be surmised how tempted any foreigner became to ravage such dead treasury enmassed at a centre; and through this senseless accumulation of material glory much of India's later and continuous hardship under foreign domination was actually been brought upon her people. The annual festivals of these deities have been observed as national

days of glorification; and the procession of the deity was solemnised with much greater pomp than the march of any royal personage. The Rathayäträ-festival of Jagannatha Svami in Purl (Orissa), the Dashera procession of Delhi are faint reminders of the eclat of those days. Gods, like royalties, have fallen victims to the growth of democracy, and now look askance at the growth of communism.

Naturally, all this property, endowments, cash and commercial interests called for efficient management. The priests became more powerful than the Kings; the temples looked substantially more solvent than the rulers of the land, who were often found to be the debtors to the credit-lending temple gods.

Under the circumstance the position of the priest was held in greater respect than that
of the king. Money lends power, and power demands awe. A king could be changed even executed; not a priest. Not only he, but the entire Brähmana class stood absolutely secured against any form of extreme punishment, which remained the share
for the poor labouring multitude.

In thinking of the priests and the temples of this period of history of India (and to a very significant extent even in modern India!) one could be reminded of the Babylonian society at its decay. In speaking of the priestly powers of that society, and of the importance, and the powers of the deities Durant observes:

Babylonia remained in effect a theocratic state, always under the thumb of the priests.... The wealth of the temples grew from generation to generation.... Certain lands were made to pay a yearly tribute to the temples.... Poor as well as the rich turned over to the temples as much as they thought profitable of their earth- ly gains. Gold, silver, lapis luzuli, gems and precious wood accu- mulated in the sacred treasury.... Priests were also the greatest financiers in Babylonia, 183

From age to age the wealth of the gods tempted again and again devastat- ing attacks, followed by holocaust. The gods, temporarily done to death, came back in other forms;

so did the priests. The cultures too died; but their shadows, like the ashes of the Sphinx, revived other cultures.

Ramanuja's intelligence at once grasped the potential power under- lying the concentration of human will around the temple. A good hold on the temples would give his organisation the real hold needed for the propagation of his religious ideas. Thus through his tremendous organisational skill he took over almost all the religious properties and holdings with the unchallenged right of controlling the assets. But he left the area of worship and worship alone, within the temple and its sanctum sanctuary, to the charge of the Vaikhanasas, thus acknowledging their superior rights as guardians of the deity. They still conduct the worship, enjoy the privilege of slaving for the comforts of the Lord, while management of the assets is left to the masters of the Sri Vaisnava-sect with their headquarters at Srirangapattama, Trichinapalli. The public are convinced of the latter's power, as this is both demonstrated and observed;
but little does it know of the Vaikhanasa priests who are studiously kept within the precincts to conduct the actual service in the nave of the temple.

The disposition of the rights of management of the assets reduced the influence of the Vaikhanasas, who as Vaisnavas, attach greater importance to their dogma of considering Visnu as the one and the only one principle without a second. The Sri Vaisnavas were believers in the qualified-monism, and needed a Second. This 'Second' force for the Śri Vaisnavas was Sri or Laksmi, who was considered as an expression of Narayana's (Visnu's) Conscious efforts at play with His alter-ego. So insistent the Vaikhanasas were on the disassociation of the female element from the Unique Monist doctrine that they were universally re- garded for their extreme form of celebacy. In fact, the Vaikhanasas were the chief propagators of the third Asrama, when the Asrama had fallen almost to disuse. Although the last of the Asramas, Sannyasa, in form at least was being maintained by the Buddhists, the Jains and the Saivas, none favoured the third Asrama, which is Vanaprastha, the stage of retire- ment after the family-life has been handed over to the generations follow- ing. The asceticism of the

Vaikhānasas made Haradatta refer to them as Vanaprasthis in his commentary on the Gautama Smrti (111.2). The king in Kalidasa's Sakuntala twits at the unresponsive heroine by asking her if she had been passing her youthful days under the vows of the Vaikhanasas. Like the Siddhas, the Vaikhanasas too remind us of similar ascetic societies formed around the Eastern Mediterranean, Egypt, Syria and Palestine-the Essines, the Mani-s and the followers of Zarathustra.

Vaikhanasas, however, refer them to certain orthodox treatises like the Smärta Sutras, and the Śrauta Sútra of the Taittiriya Sakha. We have elsewhere expressed our views of the entire legend of Tittira, Yajña- valkya and the Atris. We consider that the legend seriously expresses a schismatic division based on the fundamentals of ritual and the Vedas. We indicated how the system of Atharvan was deeply involved in this schism. From such origins the Vaikhanasas had their Grhya and Dharma Sutras, the latter bringing out an entire Mantra Samhitä, on the basis of which the rites of worship had been elaborately based. There are references to this relation between the Vaikhanasas and the Atharvan (referred to as Gāthās) in the Mahabharata, where we find Vedic rites being replaced by devotion (Sraddha), and prayers with music (Gita).183 Vaikhanasa, himself an incarnation of Brahma, was taught about these rites by Lord Visnu, who wanted to propagate Visnu worship in temples before the imaged forms of Visnu. This was the Aukheya Sûtra propounded by Ukhānas.

The dates of Ukhanas and Vaikhanas treatises are important and significant. Scholars put these around the third century A.D. when the Guptas in the North and the Colas in the South were the most powerful rulers. Between the 7th century B.C. and the 4th cent. A.D. great events had been taking place in the Western and Middle Asia. The evolution of the Vaikhanasas, of temple worship, of image sculptoring (Varahamihira's Brhat-Samhita), of the spread of the Magas and the writing of the Devala Smrti (a book of Hindu Law advocating inter-racial synthesis) together, covered this period. A great change was afoot in the rhythm of the orthodox Indian life, when influences from the world under Buddhistic form started flowing back within the Arya way of life,

causing the changes in the poised Aranyaka ethics. The names Vaikhanasa and 'Ukhanas' remind one of Parthian and Bactrian Greek names. Although these Vaikhänasa Vaisnava canons are written in Sanskrt parts are written both in Sanskrt and Tamil; and a good deal is written in Tamil alone. The attempt of syncretistic synthesis are only too evident. Lastly, the followers, most of them considered excluded from the accepted orthodox caste, were claiming Brahmanical authority, position and social status,

The Colas have been mentioned as early as in the edicts of the emperor Aśoka, and the Vaikhanasas have been mentioned by Raja Raja Cola in one of his inscriptions. The Colas were supposed to be the founders of the Vaikhanasa Agama which considers Nārāyaṇa to be the supreme God, and Om Namo Narayanaya to be the supreme Mantra.

Narayana-parā Vedah Narayana-para matah

Narayana-para mukti-r-Narayana-para gatih.

The verse above contains in short their basic belief. "Greater than the Vedas is Narayana; greater than all other ways is the Narayana Way; greater than liberation is Nārāyaṇa, Narayana is the Ultimate of all."184

"Even as by constant friction of the Arani-s, made of the Sami wood, fire leaps out in form (from nowhere), so the Unmanifest becomes manifest through constant effort through meditation and devotion."

Thus Arca (worship) and Saranagati (humble attention to god's imaged form through worship, and submissive total dedication) are the basic contribution of the Vaikhanasas.

Although the Vaikhanasas attribute their scriptures and canons to such authorities as Bhrgu, Marici, Atri and Kasyapa, from a verse of Atri quoted by Sri Citviläsa Gosväml

in his commentary on the Bhagavatam (IV: 29; 46) it appears that Atri himself had other thoughts.

When Veda decays, people depend on the Smptis: when they fail even to conform to the Smptis, they fall on the Puranas; falling short of the demand of the Puranas, they become attached to lands and commerce; when they fall even to remain straight in this, then they take recourse to the Bhagavata Dharma (Vaisnavism),186

Bhagavata Puräna itself speaks scurrilously of the way of Arrd, "I am in every being, all the time; yet people ignore me, the Self, and depend on worship for their liberation. This is indeed pouring butter in ashes."187

But in the Kannada district visiting the temples of Visnu one would still hear Tamil Prabandham in praise of Narayana being recited by the Vaikhanasas. Their devotion to the deity, insistence on ethical morals and austerity, dedication to the name and service of God became common standards for the Saivas, who offered prayers to Siva in His anthropomor- phic form.

Pasupatas, Lakulisas or Nakulisas

We have already noted that the Svetasvatara Upanisad for the first time records Šiva, and Saivism, and opens up for it a canonical base. Patanjali's reference to a Šaivic sect is as early as the second cent. a.c. This is the first historical reference to theistic Saivism. In the previous section on the Vaikhänasas we have pointed out that the 'Bhagavatas' as a term meant religious sects devoted to (a) deities; and (b) worship. The deity in the case of the Bhagavatas must be an imaged one, at times anthropological, but also aniconic or iconic, or even just symbolic. The principal emphasis was however on worship, temple and image. This was the way of the Bhagavatas, and Bhakti; i.e. the way of devotion as men- tioned in the preceding section. The Pañcaratras were Vaisnavas, and so were the Vaikhanasas. By contrast, the Agamics were Saivas; but both were given to the Bhagavata concept of Bhakti.

The Pasupatas, the earliest of the Saiva Bhagavatas known have been mentioned in the Narayaniya chapter of the Mahabharata. Siva, as the consort of Uma has always been described to have been a pro- pounder of the Saiva Agamas. It could mean two things: that the Agamas have been (1) the revelations obtained by the great Saiva saints, or, (2) propounded by an individual, or individuals considered as incarnations of Siva. Both the Vayu and Linga Puranas imply a similar beginning of the Saiva sect and their rites. The Karma and Varáha Puranas mention them only to denounce the heterodoxical rites of the Lákullia Pasupatas. 189

It is in these texts that we come across with the Pasupata Läkullfas or simply Näkulisas. Näkullia, its propounder had been a bachelor and a celibate anchorite till he died; but then Siva himself had entered into his body, and made him preach the Päfupata Dharma. This incident is supposed to have taken place in Karvan, a town in Baroda, Gujarat. Karvan is indentified with Käyävatára, or Käyävarohana (to incarnate in another's body) as the miracle is still commemorated. Two stone ins- criptions reveal the names of the four pioneers: Kusika, Garga, Mihira or Mitra and Kauruşya who are remembered to have done much for the propagation of the creed.

The Four Näkulisa Names

These names bear an extra-territorial accent. Competent scholars would one day research into the origin of these names, and determine how far my doubts are worthy of consideration. We also note that the sect is well placed in the Western section of the peninsula, along the busiest trade routes of the ancient world; between the West and the East the Gujarat coast, specially Saurastra or Surat has eversince been a traditional porting and watering place. Moreover we cannot ignore the philological forma- tion of the four names. These four names invariably remind a student of oriental civilisations of Mithra, Miträ-Varuna; Kurusa or Cirus; Garga or the father of the Gárgyas of whom we shall discuss presently; and lastly, Kufika, a name concerning the legend of Viśvämitra. Gärgyas, were in fact warlike, and belonged to the Ksatriya class; but due to some qualities they were admitted amongst the Brahmanas. These were the priests

of the Yadavas; and Sisupäla of Cedi had much to howl about the origin of these Yadavas. Garga, we remember with greater signi- ficance, had been an ancestor of Visvamitra again a Ksatriya, who had been promoted to the Brahmana rank. Another significance is attached to the name Kušika. The Kuśikas as a race had Gädhi as there leader; and this Gadhi was also known as Gathin; when we consider that Gathins as a nomenclature referred to the reciters of the Gathas, of the Atharva Veda, we could relate the Kufikas to the Atharvans. In this connection we might refer to our study regarding Angirasa, Ehrgu and Ušanas (Ukhanas?)190

The antecedents, and implications of names constitute an important part of the studies of antiquity. All this might be due to a similarity of coincidence; although it would appear to be very surprising indeed to have all the four names the benefit of a coincidence. The relation of such a mystic rite as Käyävarohana to a kind of Saivism which later on has been denounced in Kurma Purana and Yajnavalkya Samhitâ deepens our sus- picions regarding some religious trends. Were such gruesome miracles really indigenous? Or were these alien infiltrations? Do they indeed form part of Saivism? Or were they pushed into the only branch of Hinduism where canonical restrictions were not always insisted for admission of novel rites and forms?191

We find that Saivism itself has been classified into three sections: Samanya Saiva (popular or common Saivas); Purva Saiva (Eastern Saivism, or ancient Saivism) and Miśra Saiva (Egyptian Šaivism, or Mixed Saivism), The very nomenclatures distinguish the Saiva sects geographically, or culturally, or both ways. The Samanyas could be the orthodox Rudriya ones; the ones recognised by the Siddhantins, the Trika and the Puranas; but the last two set problems for us. At least these were not the Sâmânyas, i.e. these were not to be counted within the tradi- tional ones. Whether these referred to the alien trends is any body's guess.

Severest warnings have been sounded about such sects as the Laguda, Pasupata, Kavya and Soma. These were the unorthodox sects. Yajna- valkya Samhita expressedly

recommends the accommodation of alien trends into the body of Hinduism. Yet it maintains its reservations about the Nakulisa Pasupatas,193

As we consider how some of the religious frauds and opportunists took advantage of these trends of Tantra, and how the innovations which erupted from the waves of the Atharvan practices of the immigrants, we would only too readily bear with the strong language with which the atrocities of these rituals had been denounced. If proof for such pro- vocations must be recorded, listen to the carefree glee of some of these ritualists:

(a) Who would not feel happy about the Kaula Dharma (Tantric Saivism) by following which one could enjoy drinks and delicious meat?

(b) Long live the Pinaka-holder (Siva) who has prescribed for our salvation such easy-going penances as wining and wenching in informal customs and costumes!195

(c) Gods like Hari and Brahma advocate liberation by following the Vedas, meditations and Yajñas; Maheśvara, the consort of Uma alone prescribe for the same purpose sex games and alcohol,196

Naturally, in tone and derisive language these compositions indicate symptoms of degeneration, and it becomes clear how the ancient scriptural codes and social poise were being violated by some upstarts who, like political opportunists and band wagoners, made the Kaula Dharma,

Plate 23 Egyptian papyrus : 'Shu' creates the world by separating the sky goddess from the prostrate earthgod.

Plate24. Chinnamasta kangra, 18th century A.d. illustrates the cycle of Life creation and Death as one process.

Plate25. Plate 25. Camunda, the Black Mother sculpture from orissa, 11th century A.D. The fiercest and most blood-thirsty form assumed by the Mother.

Plate 26. Amarāvatī (1Ith century A.D.): Adoration of a Stūpa by Nāgas.

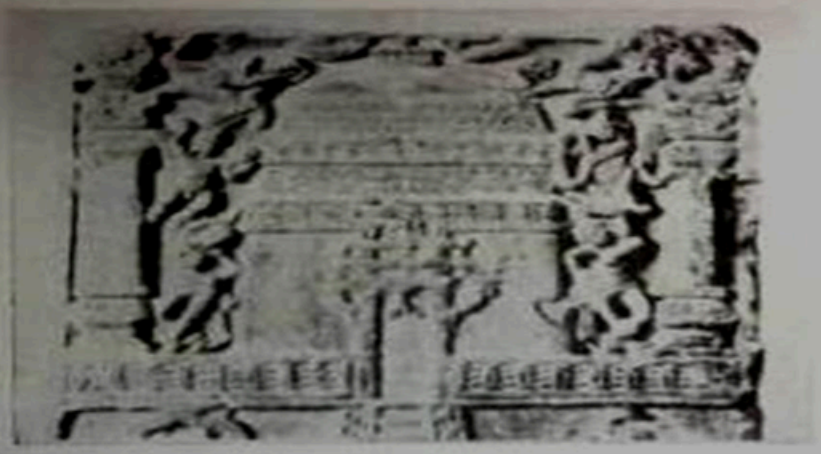

Plate 27. Marble Stūpa Amurāvatī (Late Andhra period, late 2nd century A.D., Govt. Museum, Madras).

Plate 28. Omphalos. A holy stone found as an evidence of phallic worship

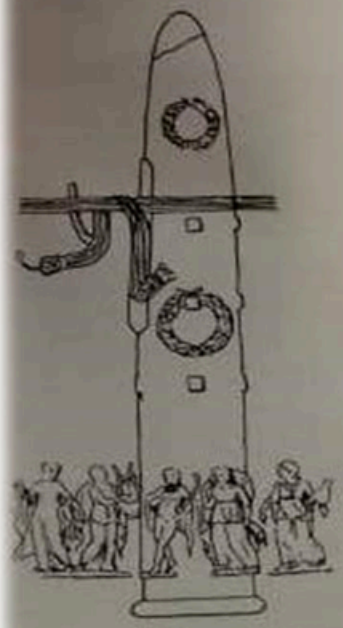

Plate 29. Omphalos: The height is to be noted, for this heralded the Roman custom of erecting such monuments around which public festivals were organised

Plate 29A. The Code of Hammurabi

Plate 30. Typhon. His body was composed of coiled serpents and his wings blotted out the sun.

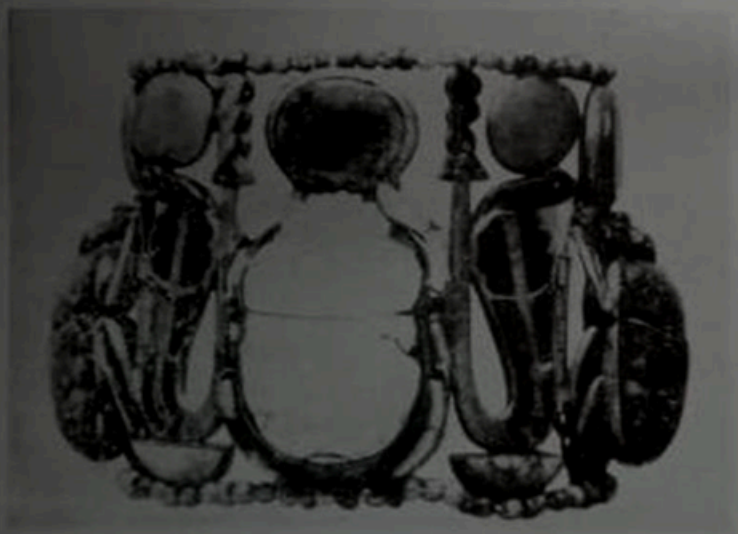

Plate 31. Khepri, the scarab-god. Before him he rolls the ball of the sun, pushing it into the Other World in the evening and over the horizon in the morning as the scarab beetle pushes before itself a ball of dung.

Plate 32. Achaemenian fire altars, which still stand in a sanctuary near Cyrus's capital of Pasasdadae.

Plate 33. The Phoenicians Ishtar represented symbolically in this stele found at Dougga in Tunis, not far from the site of ancient Carthage.

Plate 34. Acadian Naram-Sin: Sargon's grandson Naram-Sin (Acadian Dynasty) took a title that had belonged to certain god-kings of the four quarters of the world—and was himself deified.

Plate 35. The seal of a bull

Plate 36. Mithras sacrificing the bull (Mithraic altar, 2nd century B.C.). A god common to both Indian and Iranian mythology though under somewhat different forms.

Plate 37. Ellora Kailasanātha.

Plate 38. Hari-Hara : Sandstone 6th century from Prei Krabas.

Plate 39. Śiva, King of dancers.

Plate 40. Ellora Śiva Tripurāntaka.

Plate 41. Ardhanārīśvara: Sculpture from Ellora Caves, 7th century A.D. The curious composite figure, half man and half woman, represents Śiva and his 'Śakti.'

Tantra and Saivism a pretext for their respective debauchery and lust- gluttony.

Now, Kušika's date could be ascertained from a Chandragupta II inscription (380 A.D.). Judging from this, one could place Nakulisa, his Guru, between 75-125 A.D. But popular belief makes him a contem- porary of Vasudeva Krsna. This is obviously wrong; yet the basis of such a popular belief could be interpreted, if not supported. For the re-establishment of the uprooted and imported creeds and forms it was quite necessary to have them related to the names of time-honoured names of sages. The association of the name of Vasudeva Krsna was or could have been a similar attempt for rehabilitating the Pasupata creed. Dr. Bhandarkar supports this view and ascribes the rise of the Pasupatas to the 2nd cent. In the middle of the first cent. A.D. we come across the anthropomorphic representation of Siva on a coin of Wima Kadepsis, a name suspected to be of Mongolo-Parthian origin. In any case it could not have been a genuine Indian name, in spite of the use of Wima in place of Vima. This particular Siva form on Wima's coin could have a representation of Nakulisa. I am not very sure if the name itself is a homonym for Bhima Kharparisa (the terrible Lord of the skull cups), which spells out a Näkulia tendency.

Saivism's Development

The history of the development of Saivism, particularly in the South has been a complex study. Eversince the Pauranic age (a. 300 a.C.- 1200 A.D.) Saivism has been regarded as a very rich heritage to the Hindu theocratic form, as well as to the system of Yoga. The turning point in the development of the post-Buddha form of Saivism emerges out of the Alexandrine onslaught of the East, and the subsequent liquidation of the Oriental secieties, dominated, till then, by Babylon, Syria and Iran. The post-Asokan decline of Buddhism benefitted the growth of Brahmanism. The reigns of the Mauryas and the Kušanas were followed by the Guptas of Mathura, by the Thaneśvara dynasty and by the Chalukyas, Cholas and Pallavas of the South. These reigns indicate the shift of royal patronage from Buddhism to Brahmanism, i.e., Saivism or Vaisnavism as the case may be. By 700 A.D.,

when the Ajanta and Ellora frescoes and sculptures had all been finished, new forms of worship, particularly of the Trimurti (Brahma, Visnu and Siva), had completely eliminated the other Vedic forms, or Buddhistic practices. A rule was introduced in the Smrtis; it prohibited Vedic Yajñas in Kali Yuga. The Tirtha Yatra Parva of the Mahabharata is full of prescriptions of this and that rite which could easily replace the Vedic Yajñas. In a trice the holy Yajñas were reduced to the position of being non-canonical; and the Bhagavata-Smärta-rites took over.

A new life, enthusiastic about the cultivation of a religio-philosophic culture developed immediately with casteism and Brahmanism as its strongest guards in the fore front. The restrictive attempts for keeping out tribes and the hetero-cultural aliens were made through canonical enactments. The extreme form of feudalism displayed during these centuries turned over time-honoured popular rights to royal domination on the one hand, and priestly cunning and superiority on the other. Divisions and counter-divisions of 'caste' kept the idea of 'one people' under a cloud. Like the decadent societies of Babylon, Assyria and Persia, the Indians too laboured and tilled to feed their gods better than themselves. While gods were having ten meals a day, majority of the workers and toilers would thank fate to have one good meal in twenty-four hours! Fatalism affords a mesmerising pseudo-logic to justify the howling in- equalities, and atrocious disabilities. A new twist given to the theory of Karma made the servile and the docile community of god-fearing adorers completely dehumanised before the combined wrath of the king, priest and the unseen deities. The first one played the role of god's viceroy, and the second one that of god's legal adviser and mouthpiece. A study of the laws of Manu (which were being revised and truncated at will) particularly of the forms of punishment meted out to people of different castes for the same type of offence leaves no doubt about the changing pattern of society, which from the days of the Lokayata form of government (democratic people's government) had declined, and succumbed into a highly organised machine of exploitation, with god and religion as the two best excuses for covering all indecent exploitation and privations. The entire trend remind one of the dying days of the decadent oriental cultures. In the whole set up, where royalty and priestism had carved out for

themselves the most enviable privileges, only two parties suffered the most, and stood silent; man, and god.

Circumstances in history processed into a hitherto active Lokayata system of life these changes, which, eversince have been corroding Hindu culture, despite the sagacious warning of the Yogis. These circumstances were provided by the following: (a) downfall of Buddhism and Jainism: (b) complete dehumanisation of the Vedic society; (c) faith in the interest of sectarianism; (d) casteism and communalism as evidenced by the hosts of Smrtis, which protected the interest of the ever-increasing communities of immigrants from other parts of Western and Northern Asia; (e) evolu- tion of a new system of theocracy patterned on the lines of Oriental Societies and assimilated into Hinduism; (f) open effort for synthesising the variegated justifications of the ever-surging new systems; (g) the constant feuds and wars between groups of upstart royal lines supported by neo-Brahmanism; and (h) the competitive scholastic endeavours to dominate by threats and empty learning to cry down and humiliate the other party. These causes and features suddenly forced into the sub- continent a multiplicity of forms of deities and religions, which bet- ween themselves, pushed, moved, mated and countermated, like pieces on a chess-board, a new game: i.e. finding and shaping a sustaining form of Hinduism that would allow room for the divergent opinions then rock- ing the subcontinent.

Synthesis or compromise has never been a strong point of Truth. But the world of Nature is, of course, a world of syncretism. So is synthesis another force. But syncretism and synthesis are not the same kinds of forces. Uncompromising laws of elements which make no room for human or sentimental feelings, go to shape the wonderous world of Nature, which lives to illustrate to its own Truth. Truth is completely indifferent to compromise. Synthesis is an admission of compromise with human shortcomings. To the extent it compromises, it forgoes the honesty of Truth. The philosophy of compromise springs from a desire to survive, even at the cost of Truth and Peace, which calls for an uncompromising battle. That is the lesson of the Gitä..

It was a fatal day for the people, and for popular interest to have chosen for the instant sweets of compromise on the basis of an instant religion of commercial give-and-take arrangements with the gods. The ethics of the Vedic times, the ethics of Yoga and Vedänta, the ethics of the bygone sacrifices and trainings of generations were all washed away, gradually, but surely, in the interest of class and clan.

To this day a whole subcontinent of people finds it impossible to grow out of the sad and selfish commitments of the past. What was swallowed as evolution, is now waiting for a revolution, more dynamic than Buddhism, more complete than the destruction of Ninevah and Tyre; more diabolic and sinister than the white colonial laws had employed in subjugating and destroying the native societies or the Americas, Australia, New Zealand and Africa for the benefit of a covetous and greedy sickness for Power.

The Bhagavata system offered the only possible scope for the assimi- lation of the new migratory cultures. Some of these wanted to carry on with their blood and sex orgies; and a society that had grown into the very skin of Buddhism resented such horror-rites, and even offered to pro- test against its propagation. They suffered from ostracism. Schisms became inevitable. Buddhism itself broke into the schools of the Maha- yana and Hinayana; Bhagavatism broke into the Saivas, Vaisnavas and Säktas, with many more subdivisions. Saivism attempted to reconcile the extremes of secticism and sensualism, Buddhistic Yoga and Maheśvara Bhakti, of Rudra Siva and Aghora Siva. The two forms of Saivism were symbolic of history split into two: Right and Left; Day and Night; East and West; the Siddhantins and the Pasupatas. These last, the Pasu-patas, Nakullias were the Aghoras, Käpälas, the propagators of the mystery cults and magic.

The Two Saivas: Phallic and Idealistic

Of all the sects of Saivism the Pasupatas appear to have enjoyed the earliest traditions going back to the days of Huen Tsang and Bana Bhatta. It must have been more ancient as the reference of Fa-Hien describes them to have been authentically established. But the

pre- historic tribal phallicism must have been primordial, and as such of immemorial antiquity.

It was, therefore, quite natural for the phallistic interpolators to have clung to the Bhairava sects: the Pasupatas, Kälämukhas, Näkulisas, Aghoras and Käpälas. These have not only been supported by the human traditions of the entire Sakta world, but also by certain Jaina and Buddhist sects. The Vayu, Kurma, Linga Puranas and some of the Agamas, which form the Saivic canonical literature (together with the Svetasvatara Upanisad) are eloquent on denouncing the heterodoxical sacrilegious traits of the Vämä Märga. The Kashmir Pratyabhijñä Advaita Monism, and the Yoga Aphorisms of Patanjali, the lionine growls of purists like Samkara and Appaya maintained the idealistic Saivic monism within the sacred boundaries of Patanjali's Yoga tenets, and adopted the Linga as the Yogic sign of Existence, of the Neutral beyond even the Zero; of the conceptual but apperceptive 'X'. The Agamas were replaced by the fourteen Siddhänta Sastras. Varaha Purana calls the Pasupatas to be non-Vedic. So does the Vayu speak of some Agamas, like the Kämikä, as heterodox. The Mahabharata alone appears to be an exception. In it the Agamas and the

Pañcaratras have been considered at par with the Vedas and the Yoga system. This could have been due to the way in which the epic had grown in bulk, by incorporating from time to time the various opinions found popular at one time or another. The spirit of synthesis displayed in it is almost apologetically compromising. Kulluka Bhatta admits that the Vedic and the Tantric methods are equally effective. The process of synthesis was completed; the law, of syncretism was vindicated. The immigrants were fully absorbed into the indigenous body of the native Indians.

The Indian Saiva Saint Appar speaks highly of the Five-lettered Mantra Na-mah-Si-od-ya, and equates it in effectiveness with the entire contents of all the Vedas!

South Indian Saivism and the growth of the Pallavas could be said to be concurrent. Prof. Nilakantha Sastri cites authorities to prove that the Saiva trend in the South had lived "centuries before the great period of South Indian Saivism under the Pallavas." Criticisms of the Päsu-patas and the Kälämukha Saivas have been voiced in several contem- porary

literary sources. Inscriptions, and traditions as well indicate aversions against the gruesome rites of these Saivas, 200 The Käpälikas and the Kälämukhas had their centres spread all over India, but due to the popular antagonism against their non-Vedic and anti-social behaviour, they were sent into hiding at once, where clandestinely they continue to this day to practise their creed.

This had to continue, because, although un-Vedic, the traditions of these are primordially connected with the earliest of the tribal and the most ancient of the alien trends. In a way the trend had been, and still is, to a very large extent international. The adoption of the Linga as a focal point of concentration in Samadhi was not known to have inter- fered with the tribal phallistic adoration of other totems and manas. The tribal world was self-contained, and each respected the other with freedom of opinion regarding the spiritual and mystic forms. It is, therefore, reasonable to question why the same Aryans put up so stiff objection to the other kinds of phallic rites which the Haihayas, the Pallavas and the Rastrakutas had been patronising. Why were the sages like Parasurama, Atri, Datta and the Nakullia Pasupatas so much decried?

The answer is very simple. The tribal worship of totems were in- nocent, and rudely direct without any pretence of sophisticated canons and the cult of the Guru. It was neither a threat to the Vedic Varnas, nor to the Asramas. It did not create social and religious problems, But the latter did. The neo-Hindu Yogis roamed all over the land, and through their promiscuous and drug-adicting rites posed a great threat to the spiritual equilibrium in society. But by incorporating non- Aryan sympathies, and by hammering at the very metaphysical ethics of the Vedic caste system, it lured others to a society of pseudo-acceptance, when in fact the process was giving rise to a more rigid caste, with more ingrained privileges claimed through an artificial hierarchy of heredity on the one hand, and a simultaneous encouragement of a degraded, hated, devalued, dehumanised society of pariahs on the other. The Vedic society could see through this complex intrigue, and denounced the reli- gious system which deluded the mass, and organised itself into artificial and arbitrary groups of the privileged and the proletariat.

After the Pallavas, the Colas became great patrons of Saivism. They not only continued the unfinished work of the Pallavas, but went as far as taking active steps to suppress Vaisnavism. The royal influences were successful in keeping Saivism contained within given canons and doctrines, which became fixed during their reigns. (The Smrtis of Yajnavalkya: Harita; Apaştamba and Kätyäyana.)

The expansion of greater Indian culture to the Far-Eastern countries inclusive of the Eastern archipelagoes was finally organised under the Colas, although the tradition of early Saivism, of Pasu and Pasa, had already been an established religion, according to Fa-Hien. Java, Champa, Malaya and Siam still bear the stamp of Saivism of the non-orthodox variety. The Skandas were a significant unorthodox sect. We have also spoken of the images of the Persian-Babylonian-Assyrian cultures. It is remarkable that images generally satisfying the descriptions of the Fowl-god, the Bachelor-god the Love-god, the White-goddess, the Mother goddesses are found flourishing along with Saivism as extended in these far-flung areas of the Eastern seas, as far as Latin America.

The presence of the deities of the Soma-Skanda, Uma-Maheivara groups and of the Mother Goddess with her family members point out that the effects of the immigrations did not stop in India, but went further East, with an added urge gathered from the rejuvenated revival that the Indian minds could furnish in evolving the inspired neo-Hinduism of the times. The very substantial Vedic truths, the Upanisads, the Puranas and the Epics had completely rehabilitated all alienism, and a new India, a new Hinduism, a new culture swept over the countries of the Indian ocean in the East. Buddhism had already laid the grounds for a certain type of spiritual hunger; and this became all the more whetted with the arrival of a picturesque form, such as Bhagavatism. projected.

The Pasupatas, Mäheśvaras, Kälämukhas, Käpälikas, generally termed under the Indo-Tibetan term 'Bhairava' continued their obscure mysti- cism under the umbrella of Tantra; but the two were so different that it called for a bridge between the Agamic Saivism and Tantric Saivism. The answer was the Soma-Siddhänta. We have seen how Saivism has

continued within the two cults of Agni and Rudra; similarly, the various forms of the great Mother, like the matronly set of Umä, Gauri, Parvati and Ambika on the one hand and the more fearsome set of Käll, Tärä, Durga, Candi, Camunda and Nirrti on the other were combined under the synonym of Tantra. It was in the Cakra mysticism, specially in the Sri Cakra, and in the rite of Pürṇabhişeka that this synthesis finds its ultimate form.

We shall deal with this aspect separately.

There is something else than licentiousness in these aberra- tions. The books which prescribe these practices are, like the rest, filled with lofty speculative and moral reflections, nay, even with ascetic theories. Here as well as elsewhere, there is a profession of horror at sin, and a religiosity full of scruples; it is with pious feelings, the thoughts absorbedly engaged in prayers, that the believer is to participate in these mysteries, and it would be to profane then to resort to them for the gratification of senses,201

Whilst the Vaisnava Pancaratra school never crossed the limits of propriety in their pursuit of Bhakti, and the associated religious rites, these trends of the Pasupata school, which according to the Mahabharata had been the earliest form of Saivism, developed along a rather mystic channel of excessive sensuousness under the cover of Tantricism. Siva Srikantha, says the Mahabharata, has been the propounder. Scholars believe that this Srikantha could be a Saiva Acarya. We have heard of the Nepalese Srikanthanatha in whose name there exists in the Nepal Darbar Library the treatise Pinglämäta. Läkullia or Näkullia might have been his disciple, and Läkullia had his other four disciples, already mentioned. Apart from these four, Patanjali himself is regarded as one of his disciples, thus underlining the theory that the system of Yoga is an unorthodox system which was developed with a view to attaining liberation without any of the Tantric rites.

The Tantric Saiva currents (Srota) flow in three strains: Dakgina-Srota (right-current); Vama-Srota (left-current) and Madhyama-Srota (middle- current). These signify the three Saktis of Siva as containing the three Gunas: Sattva, Rajas and Tamas respectively. The right face of Siva gave current to the Daksina-Dhärä with four forms of Sadhana: Vidya,

Mantra, Mudra and Mandala. To Vidyä (knowledge) belong the eight Bhairavas who gave us the eight Tamala treatises.

The associated Saktis for these Yamalas are: Yoginljala, Yogi- nihrdaya, Mantramalini, Mahämärici, Aghoresvart, Krdaghoreśvari, Lakinikalpa, Märici, Aghoramärici, Ugravidyagana. The Mantra (mystic syllables) and Mudrä (diagrams) are treated in a compound. The gods of the Mudräpitha (the bases of diagrams), Siva and Rudra, decides on the Mudras. From the Upper Mouth of Siva flows the Madhyama Srota. The associated Tantras in this case are found in two sets: (a) Vijaya, Niśvāsa, Svayambhů, Vätula, Virabhadra, Raurava, Mukuta, and Viresa; (b) Candrajaäna, Bimba, Prodgita, Lalita, Siddha, Santana, Sarvodgita, Kirana, and Parameśvara. Amongst the masters of these Tantras we find such names as Usanas, Brhaspati, Dadhici, Kaca, Läku- lisa, Santakumāra, etc. We are interested in some of these names, which we had discussed before in order to show if persons like Ušanas, Dadhici and Brhaspati were found engaged in the greater struggle of early synthesis. The Vama Srota remains unspoken of. It has to be learnt from within the Self. No one could speak of it and teach it.

Most religious historians become targets of attack from practising Gurus and priests because of their dogmatic views, which alone justify whatever attacks they favour the historians with. It is with the greatest temerity and caution, therefore, that the present student presents his views on the basis of his findings. But if further categorical proofs of such extreme forms of the phallic are needed to illustrate how rude and indecent some of the derided forms could be, the author could refer to only two iconographical references, which might suffice. There is an image of Siva with a lingam, worshipped in a temple situated at Gudimallam (Paradurämeśvara Lingam) (see Plate 10). This Lingam is a contemporary sculpture of the times of the Kushanas. The actual sculptur- ing is as realistic as such representations could have been. The form given immediately brings to the mind of a stele found at Susa (2000 8.c.) now at the Louvre. It contains the code of Hammurabai (see Plate 29A). When we compare the dates, inference becomes irresistible. References could be made to some of the realistically carved phallic forms of worship

found at Mohenjo-daro; to the Siva Linga at the Samkarācārya temple of Srinagar (Samkaravardhana Lingam) or to one found in Japan and referred to in the book, Phallic Worship, by G. Ryley. There are some of these lingams situated in Kannada, Orissa and Telengana, beyond the ordinary beats and reaches of the pilgrims, and known only to initiates. These iconographical shapes, compared to the simple linga Murtis that the Siddhäntins worship, or the Vira-Saivaites wear on their bodies make the point clear.

1. Lewis, Dr. H. D. The Study of Religions (Pelican), p. 129.
2. Ibid., p. 136.
3. Ibid., p. 162.
4. See Gloss.
5. (a) Tales about Hermaph- rodites are not peculiar to Hindu myths alone. Psychologists affirm that in all males there persists an inherital strain of the female, and vice versa. This is normal, and need not be confused with freaks or sick souls. Aberra- tions in similar fields give rise to such abnor- malities as Lesbianism or Homosexualism. These sex-perversions too need not be confus- ed, as is often done, with the male-female concept suggested in the Saiva Siddhänta. The translation of the refer- ences to the "Two-Ways' in esoteric hermaphroditic con- cept into a formal experience image answers the rit- ualistic needs of Agamic aspirants. The very idea of carving
6. Svetasvatara, III: 2.
7. Madhavan, Dr. T. M. P. 'Saiva Siddhanta (Hist. of Phil. Eastern and Western: Radhakrishnan), p. 373.
Compare: (a) Dr. Sharma, Early Hist. of Vaishnavism, etc. (b) Ibid. (c) Dr. Hazra, C. H. I., Vol. IV. (d) Ibid.
experiences of St. Theresa; legends of Lady Fatima; appearances of Gabriel; records of Rama-krishna, Vijayakrishna Goswami, etc.
C. H. of India, Vol. IV.
8. Drsti-Sreti-vada of Madhu- sudana Saraswati claims that all perceptual objects are results of mental projections. Such a claim is a natural and logical climax of Samkara's Advaita Monism.
9. Madhusudana, S. Advaita Siddhi
10. (i) Guta, VII: 24; (ii) Rg Veda, 1: 165:16; (iii) Ibid., 1: 109: 7 (iv) Ibid., 6: 26: 4; (v) Brhadaran yaka, VI: 2:15; (vi) Kaupftaki, 1: 12; (viii) Chandogya, V: 4:1; V: 53, 2; V: 5, 1; and V: 10, 304.
11. The progress of the evolutes along the two ways has been engaging the attention of the yogis from times immemorial. The history of spiritualism exists; it was known amongst the ancient cultures. The

images for ritualistic support of spiritual quest has been strongly enjoined by Patanjali Varähamihira, and even Vädarayana. (Yoga Sutra, 1: 39). (b) "The symbolism of Hermaphrodites is of a person

Danielou, op. cit., p. 203.

(c) "He divided his body into halves; one female; the male in that universe is Vak, or Nada; but the moment female pro- creates the universe." -Manu of expe- rience is also a point of expe- Smrti, I: 32. (d) The male principle is also rience sprung into the Field, the Space, as represented as fire, the devourer, and the Expression. This point is the Bindu. Siva is female principle as Soma, the devoured Time and Space: Nada and Bindu. offering. The Herma- phrodite is then the bodiment of Cosmic Sacrifice, the Image of the willed one, Mother-

Devata Tattva; San- marga, III, 1942.

(i) Compare Soaha and Svadha legends in Devi Bhagavatam

(ii) Cosmic sacrifice imaged as male- female mating has been adored in the myths of Tibet, Egypt, etc.

16. Gita, III: 35; IV: 39-40; XVIII: 47.

17. Sastri, Dr. S. N. Phil. of Saivism. (Cult. Her. Ind., RIC) III: 390.

18. Sivajnanamapadiyam.

19. Sastri, op. cit., 392.

20. Gita, II: 50.

21. Ibid., VI: 8,

22. Ibid., VI: 8,

23. St. John: At the beginning was the word, and the Word was with God.

24. Radhakrishnan, Hit. Ind. Ph., II: 106.

12. Ishwar Hemaprabhu is a true person at this stage: he remained so equivalent to that of Linga and Yoni" for years; until when he spoke again, only to speak so much with so few words.

13. Suddha Maya, the Mother of the male, and

popular Bengali hymn by the Yogi Kamaläkänta.

15. St. Theresa. Confessions, Ch. XV.

25. Tärkäbhushan, P. N. Para Mimana

26. Sastri, Dr. P. T. Raju, Indian Psychology; Ibid., 599-600.

27. Sastri, Dr. S. N. op. cit., 393.

28. Graves, (Ency. Myth-Larousse), 84

29. ibid., p.224

30. A silver plaque from the Gundestrup bowl and (the so-called) Pasupati figure of the Indus Valley civilisation may be compared.

31. Katha Up., 1: 3, 14.

32. Gita, III: 37-39.

33. Aghora Šiva. Tattva Praka- Jika, V: 243.

34. A Tantra, quoted in Sid- dhanta, V: 243.

41. Radhakrishnan. Ind. Phil.,II: 315. 42.Ibid., 324. 43. Ibid., 326-27.
44. Ibid. 45. Ibid. 46. Ibid. 47. Ibid., 542. 48. John Huxley, Aldous, Perennial Philosophy, 193.
50. Radhakrishnan. An Idealist View of Life, 107-8.
52. Yoga Valistha, (i) IV: 18, 16, 27; (ii) IV: 47, 14. 14 ff.
55. Yoga Vasistha: Nirvana, 1.
56. Ibid.
57. (1) Svetasvatara, I, (ii) Manu Smrti, 12: 119; (iii) Gita, XII: 5.

(iv) देवतायाः शरीरं तु बीजात् उत्पद्यते 75. GItä, VI: 41.

धुरुवम् ।
Indeed the bodies and forms of the Devata are generated from 'seed', i.e., Bija-Mantra.-Tamala Tantra.

(v) उपासकानां ससद्धयरंथं ब्रह्मणो रूपकल्पना ।
The Real is imaged for assisting the aspirants. (vi) Bhagavata Puranam, XI: 28: 12; (vii) Jabala Dariana Upanisad, 4: 59; (viii) Calarf commentary on Tantrasara Samgraha.
58. Danielou, op. cit.
59. Ibid., 12-13.

42. Meyakondr, Sivajnanabo- dham, XII: 3.
43. Holdr, Śiva-jñāna-kotha: drvatare, priyo kori, pripere devata. Tagore, R. N. Vainana Kavita (Bengali-Cavanikā).
जीवो ब्रह्मैव नापरं ॥
36. Epistle, 49.
37. Nyaya Bhasya; IV: i, 21.
38. Gromperz. Greek Thinkers, I: 353.
39. Radhakrishnan. Ind. Phil., II: 315.
40. Yoga Vasistha: Nirvana.
51. श्लोकारथेन प्रवक्ष्यामम यदुकतं ग्रन्थ कोसिस ः। । - ब्रह्म सत्यं जगन्मिथ्या
53. Gita, (i) III: 39; (ii) V: 15. 54. Smart, Ninian. World Religions (Pelican), 68; 71; Ibid., IV: 40. 72. Ibid., IV: 42. 73. Ibid., IV: 34. Chardin. The Future of Man (Fontana), 318 ff.

77. Bhagavatam, XI: 12.
78. Gita, XI: 48; 53-54.
79.Radhakrishnan. An Idealist View of Life, 85.
80.Tagore. Religion of Man, 14.
81.Ibid, p. 84.
82.Mundaka Up., 111: 2: 3.
83. Holders to the dogma of Trinity may not mistake these as being three persons, or divinities.
84. Pandey, Dr. K. C. in Hist. of Phil. (Radhakrishnan), I: 66. 85. "The more

60. Koho Chison. Soto Zen, 66-67.

61. Chardin,Teilhard de. Future of Man (Fontana), 318-19.

62. Life of St. Theresa.

63. Ibid.

64. Soet. Up., IV: 12.

65, Sayana, Rg Veda Bhasya (Kalyana-Siva Anka), 169.

66. Maha Narayana Up., 47.

67. Gita, XVII: 7.

68. For Cit refer to Yoga Vasistha: Nirvana Prakarana, I.

69. Tomar khadga andhar makige, dukhan korilo katiya

70. Gita, IV:37.

87. Abhinavagupta. Paramartha- sara, V: II 51; 52, 88. The Bible Exodus, III:13-14.

89. यो देवानां नामधा एक एवं
तं संपश्यन् ुवना यन्त्यन्या ।
-Rg Veda, X: 82. 3.

90. The Bible Exodus.

91. Pandey, Dr. K. C. 'Kashmir saivism hist. of phil. (Radhakrishnan), 386.

92. Rúmi, Jalaluddin, A. J. Arberry's translation.

94. St. John on the Cross. The Living Flame of Love, XIV, XV.

95.Herodotus.

96. Arthasastra.

97. (1) Arunat yavanah Sake- tam, arunat yavanah Madhyamikam,

important documents on symbolism, the myths, the philosophy of early Saivismare found in the Saiva Agamas, the Saiva six Upanisads and the Saiva Puranas: the Linga Purana, the Skanda Purana, the Kurma Purana, the Siva Purana, the Brahmanda Purana"-Danielou, op. cit.,189. 86. Vasudeva: The word means "One who is in all". Väsu- deva also means the son of Vasudeva. The Vasudevas are those who follow Vasu- deva, the principle.

आगतं पंचवक्रानुतु गतं च
समरर्जानने ।
मतंच वासुदेवस्य तस्मादागम- मुच्यते

Spoken by the Five-faced One Philosophy of Väsu- deva entered face (ear) of the Mountain Maid: so it is known as Agama.

101. Ibid., 289-292.

102. Ibid.

103. Cox and Williams, op. cit.

104. Plotinus. Ennead (Inge), 197-9.

105.Guta, II: 40.

106. de Burgh, W. C. Legacy of the Ancient World, 348.

Ennead (Inge), II: 135-42.

107. Ibid., 194.

108.Radhakrishnan. Upanisads.

109. Ibid., 194.

110.Chandogya Up., VI: 2, 34.
Taittiriya Up., II: 6, 1.

Panini. (ii) Cox and William. Persia, Ency. Britt. XIV-Ed. 98. Cox and William., op. cit.
99. "It is the first and second centuries before Christ that the Syrians, Greeks and Scythians poured down into the Punjab, and conquered it, and established there for some three hundred years, this Greco-Bactrian culture durant op. Cit I 450. 100. Prof. Gilbert Murray, quot-ed by Russell (Bertrand) in his Hist. of West Phil., 275.
121.Radhakrishnan. Idealist View of Life.
122. Basu, op. cit. 123. Gita, XI: 48, 52-54.

124.Abhinavagupta Pratya- bhijna Vimarsinf, II, 92-93.
125. Gita, IV: 40.
126. Tantrasara (Kashmir Edi-tion), pp. 25-28.
127. Basu. op. cit., pp. 96-97.
128. Radha-cult, contemporary of Krsna-cult. Radha Tantra mentions Shyamasaparya vidhi-Kashinath (1777).
129. (a) Iana Samhita.
(b) Viivasároddhara Tantra.
(c) Urdhamnaya.
130. Yogini Tantra.
131. Visva-Sara Tantra.
132.Meru Tantra: Ingreji-Nava-Sat-Panca Candraja-s-Capi Bhavina.
133. Harrison, Jane, E. Themis, p. XIII.
134. Ibid., p. XII.

111.Ennead, IV: 8.
112.Confessions, VII: 9.
113. Cox and Williams, op. cit.
114.Basu, Aurobindo. Kashmir Saivism (Cult. Hert. Ind., RIC), IV: 82.
115. Ivara Pratyabhijna Vimärgini I: 5, 13.
116. Bhaskar. Bhaskart.
117. Bimba-Pratibimba-Abhasa. All basically mean reflection as in a mirror, or on the surface of still water.
118. Anandadeva khalvimani bhu- tani jayante-Taittiriya Up... 36.
119. (a) Kurma P. (Parva), XII: 2, 59.
(b) Ibid., XVI (Asiatic So-ciety), p. 555.
120.Basu, Dr. A. op. cit.

148. Yamunācārya. Ibid.
149. Toga Sátra, 1: 36, 35.
150.Ibid, 1: 47.
151.Chakravarty, Chintaharan, Tantrakatha (Bengali-Viśva- Bharati), p. 8.
152. Parananda Mata (Baroda), P. 16,
153. Nihindsa Tantra Samhita (Darbar Library, Nepal).
154. Woodroffe. op.cit., pp. 27-31.
155.Ibid., pp. 96-100.
156.Yoga Sutra, I: 42.
157.Tantrasdra: Kulacăra-pra- karana.
158.Bhagavata Purana, XI: 5: 11.
159.Kulärṇava, II: 129.
160.Ibid., II: 47.
161.Ibid., II: 2.
162.Vijaya Tantra.
163.Lewis. op. cit., p. 20.

135. Yoga Sutra, 1: 23-39.
136. Prof. Masper. Quoted by Dr. Frazer in Golden Bough. 137. Lewis, I. N. Ecstatic Reli-gion, p. 201ff.
138. Toga Sutra, I: 39.
139. Sarada-Tilaka, XXXV: 70.
140. Lewis, op. cit., p. 39.
141. Ibid., p. 39.
142. Ibid., p. 68.
143. (a) Atharva Veda, VI: 38:124
(b) Om sarve vai devak Devim upatastho, Ka-si tvam mahadeviti sarva uai aham brahma sva rupini. Mattah puramajam jagat.
(c) Kularnava Tantra 210 285 240 241

144. Yajnavalkya Samhita: (Ana- dairam) Svetasvatara Up.
p. N.
145. Kularnava Tantra, XI: 85.
146. Kulluka Bhatta. Commentary on Manu Samhita, II: 1.
147. (a) Vedottama. Pancaratra pramanya
(b) Yamunäcärya. Tantra Pramanya.
173. Ibid., p. 145.
174. Gita, IV: 18.
175. Coomaraswami. op. cit., 146.
176. Ibid., p. 148.
177. Yoga Sutra, 1: 37.
178. Gita, XV.
179. Vermes, G. The Dead Sea Scroll, pp. 37-13: Hymn 10, VI: 39-41.
180. Sastri, V. Ramana, Dor- trinal Culture and Traditions of the Siddhas (Cult. Hist. Ind., RIC), IV: 306.
181. Sen, Dr. K. M. Bharater Sanskrti

164.Tibet, Thubtan Jigma Norge (Pelican), Pp. 167-8.
165. Yogacara, I. 20.
166. हकारयः वीसतिताः सूयो ठकारश्चेन्द्र उच्यते ।
सूयि चन्द्रमसोयोगाः
हठ योगी सनगद्यते ।
Quoted by Mrs. K. Mullick. Nathapantha (Bengali Viśva-Bharati).
167.Rg Veda, X: 129.
168.Sen, Dr. Natha Cult (Cult Hert. Ind., RIC), IV: 281.
169. न त्ंवं पुमानसस उत वा कुमारी त्ंवं
जीणेन काष्ेठेन वचपसस ।
170. Coomaraswami, Dr. Ananda. "Sahaja": Dance of
171.Ibid., p. 144.
172. Ibid., p. 144.
[The translation could be done otherwise to side-track the historical message con- tained in the phraseology. Mitra means 'mixed', as well as Egypt. Parua means East as well as Prior.] (Cat. Madras Govt. Orien- tal MSS. Library, XXII- 12-5502).
193. (a) Karma Purana, First Half, Ch. 16.
(b) Yajnavalkya Samhita.
194. Kaviraj Rajasekhara. Kar- pura Manjari, 1: 23.
195. Mahendra Varman (Pal- lava King). Mattavilasa, 1:7.
196.Ibid., I: 24.

(Bengali: Viśva Bharati), Santiniketan.
182. Durant. op. cit., I: 233.
183. Mahabharata, VI: 59.
184. Traditional Narayana Pray ers (Vaikhanasas).
185. यर्थारसणप्रधरे्षेण वण्हेरायासतघूमताम् -Bhag. Purana,IV: 29: 22.
186. वेदैसवहीनाश्च पठन्मन्त शास्त्र शासे्त्रेण हीनाश्च पुराणपाठाः । पुराणहीनाः कृसर्षणो वन्मन्त भ्रष्टास्तर्था गवताः वन्मन्त ।।
187. Bhag. Pu., III:29:22.
188. Mahabharata:Narayaniya.
189. (a) Bagchi,Dr.B.C.Studiesinthe Tantras, pp. 4,95.
(b) Majumdar,Dr.R.C."Evolutionof Religio-Phi- losophicalCultinIndia,
190. Raja, Dr.G.Cunhan.VedicCult(Cult. Hert. Ind., RIC).
191. Majumdar,op.cit.
192. आदी सामान्य श्री तु पूवीसितीयक।
समश्रणैवं तृतीयतु शुद्धमेवं चतुर्थिकं।
At the beginningtherewerethecommon (tribal) follow- ersofSiva;nextcamethe Eastern Saivas,-thosewhobelongedtothe Eastern ways. Thethirdcategorycamefrom Egypt (Misr). ThefourthtypeofSaivas (those who are theVedant-ists)arethe purest.
197. Bhandarkar, D. R. Other Religious Saivism, Vaisnavism & Systems (Trubner, Strassbourg).
198. (a) Appar. II: 5
(b) Sangam Literature: Silpa- dikaram, XI: 128-30.
(c) Bhatta, Kulluka. Quot- ing Harita,
199. Sastri, Nilakantha. A His- torical Sketch of Saivism.
200. Ibid.
201. Barth, A. Religions of India (Trans. J. Wood, Kegan Paul).

ChapterSeven

The Legends

I

Nature of Myths

THERE ARE two types of Myths current in India; one, a homogeneous mass recorded in the epics and the Puranas; and another, current amongst the most ancient tribes. The most ancient of the people who still continue to be matrilinear are the Nayars of South India. In the Nayars the tribal and later culture meet proving that the Purana-myths record such mixtures in mythical language, a special language with a special technique used for a special purpose. Dr. Graves calls a myth 'a narrative short- hand of ritual mime' associated with public festivals and performances. In the myths, therefore, we find ancient proto-austroloid tribal lores; later, sophisticated incidents of history, geography and cultural traits a record of mystic admixture of different rites observed by different people and many more things. Myths can no longer be discarded as allegory, satire, fable, romance or fiction. Myths have their own idioms, own forms, own techniques and own methods of stylising facts and truths into symbols and totems. These are now being closely studied as a special branch of comparative religion. The Hindu myths constitute a mixture of Brahmanism and anti-Brähmanism, Vedism and anti-Vedism or Asurism. These differences often end in seemingly contradictory positions found untenable by those who are uninitiated to the technique of reading mythology. The beliefs held by peasants, and

the faiths held by the educated, often betray similar contradictions. New gods and old gods are often found in conflict. Reincarnation, for example, appears to be a non-Vedic idea developed with care and skill within the pattern of post-Buddha Hinduism; and there arose a complex situation when such re- incarnating process was used to explain and exalt many ideas, or denounce others. The situation also come handy in accepting tribal gods in the Hindu pantheon side by side with Vedic gods.

"The myth of the civilised people of India follows social, particularly educational strata rather than geographic or ethnic distribution. In terms of education the common people are at least one step behind the educated; sometimes indeed their beliefs have been regressed." But the pantheon, as a result, becomes accepted commonly by all. This creates no spiritual murmur because of the basic properties of Hinduism as a way of life. A Hindu might be, and is enjoined to be, strictly adhering to his god or his idea of god; but he is not thereby required to disown, much less deride, the religious concepts of others. Hence the unbroken growth of the Hindu mythology. It records on unending accommodation of a variety of forms and deities within the wings of its basic philosophical content. This is again another reason why, to a Hindu, philosophy and religion are coterminous. The myths of India did not grow along any geographical and ethnic pattern. To India the cultural patterns of the Oriental countries, Iran, East Africa and South East Asia had polarised. The historical events in these parts drove the human population for seeking a new home. This would be India. The ethnic pattern of India, thus got mixed up in the original eschatology of the Hindu pantheon. 'Beliefs have regressed' at times because of the same reason of catching up with the past on the part of the guest-ideas, which percolated from distant fluid areas. India's care held strong and firm, otherwise for weaker cultures such acceptance and assimilation would have created some violent upset. In India's case it did not. A strong digestive system indicates an excellent health and constitution.

This is why Dr. Graves finds Indian myths 'highly complex' and swinging from "physical abandon to rigorous asceticism and fantastic visions of the spirit world." Of course, Dr. Graves could have related the trends to the several influences to which the Indian society

was exposed between the second century a.c. and the second century A.D. a very long period indeed, but not too long for effecting a mythological assimilation, and a resultant increase in the families of gods.

Several legends shall now be narrated for making the point clear that Vedism in India before the 5th century a.c. and after the 11th century A.D. did not remain the same. Many displaced Aryans and non-Aryans, mostly influenced by the schools of Atharvan-Angira, Bhrgu-Agastya, Jamadagni-Dattatreya-Kapila-Yajnavalkya migrated here, and added to the existing Hindu pyramid more elaborate superstructures.

The most remarkable of these new trends that evolved out of the old, and yet appeared as new, was Saivism.

We have so far been studying Siva-metaphysics and its basic relation to spiritual awareness and ecstasy. This helps us in understanding three facts:
(1) that what is known as Saivism, or the Siva way of life, actually is based on systematised thinking. It is not cheap idolatry, neither could it be brushed aside by describing it as tribal or phallic;

(2) that the phallic form of primitive adoration gets mixed up with the Saivic form, thus creating a popular misconception that Saivism is phallic;

(3) that in spite of similarities of certain forms of legends and traditions between Hindu Siva-traditions and Indo-Mediterranean religious traditions, the former is to be regarded as an independent growth based on systematised metaphysical thinking.

Even if generally accepted, these do not explain why certain Siva rites, Siva forms and Siva images, with their details, are found reflected on almost similar legends and images which are popular in other parts of the world. The question suggests itself: how then the ancient meta- physical thoughts abandoned their abstract subjectivity, and condescended
to assume the concrete objectivity of images and forms, along with a variety of legends attached to them? In other words, how did the Siva-ideal acquire any anthropological

dramatisation completed with very touching human legends attached to them? Where was the need? What supplied the mechanics of this transformation?

We have already hinted at the different forms that the idea of Siva has taken. Now we propose to deal with this popular side of Saivism in greater detail. We shall state the forms; their different 'classes'; those Western legends which closely remind us of our Siva legends; and classi- fication of the legends. Some of them are interpretative of philosophical doctrines, some of historical events, and yet some others of cultural traditions.

The antecedents of the ritualistic Siva worship, as distinct from Saiv. ism as a system of metaphysics, run back prior to the Vedic times as a sym- bolised deity of Yogic austerity." Yoga as opposed to 'Sacrifice' formally crystallises the Siva tradition as opposed to Indra tradition. The Vedic Indra's transformation into the Purana-Siva could not be effected without some conflict with the Fire-god, Agni. It was fully established only after absorbing the Agni cult into the Siva concept. Thus of the Hindu triad Brahma, Visnu and Siva, Brahma has passed into just a formal identity and is now regarded only as an abstract concept. Visnu takes over the Vedic Indra form; and in Siva we find absorbed both the Agni and Varuna traditions. The Siva-legends, which we are about to study,

The emerging trends got incorporated in Saivism which took three forms: one, the ascetic Yogi form, which in its abstinence from blood, fire and sex bears a Buddhist imprint; two, the Tantra forms, engaged in blood, fire and sex; and last, the Bhairava Päíupata form, given to Paludcara (animalistic rites).

The fertility cult of the Bull also, for this very reason, adhered to Śiva- worship. In fact, the original Siva concept in Hinduism was so firmly based as to be able to absorb most of the Indo-Mediterranean trends which must have been reaching the shores of India. The historical evidence of such transmission of culture is not wanting. The Puriṇas again and again echo such migratory tendencies.

Two Important Periods of History

The fusion was fairly continual; but two periods in history specially attract our attention. The first period (2250 to 900 B.c.) coincides with the Assyrian Kings of Asshur (c. 2400) and the decline of the Assyrian power in c. 900 B.c. This was the period during which, a number of remarkable world-events took place: (i) the climax of the Mionan culture, (ii) rise of the Mycenean culture, (iii) fall of Crossus, (iv) seige of Troy, (v) exodus to Israel (c. 1230), (vi) rise of the Phoenician sea power, (vii) rise of the first African colonies of the 12th century B.c., (viii) the reigns of Saul and David, (ix) the fall of the Hittites, (x) rise and fall of Baby- lonia, and (xi) the advent of the Dark Age.

Indeed this had been an important period. Dramatic events were taking place around the Arabian sea, and along the Western trade route. We have seen the magnificent system of commerce flourishing along a very well established traditional maritime trade route. Commercial links act efficiently also as cultural media; and the harassed migrants always find means of migrating to more secured and quieter places, where they might not be welcome, but they would not be entirely unknown strangers. (The Chitturs of Madras claim to have been blown from the sea!)

The second important period in history, when such migratory population overwhelmed the Indian peninsula, ranged between the Assyrian recovery and the Macedonian conquests (900 to 300 m.c.), when the Aegean area, Israel, Babylon and Assyria became theatres of great changes. Since Alexander until the establishment of the Chola supremacy in the Deccan (1014 A.D.) the subcontinent of India was being racked by several political pressures most of which came from long- term effects of cultural inundations of rather alien origin-Greeks, Scythians, Hupas, Gurjaras, etc.; and the complexity of peoples grown out of these synthetical features of living history occupy largely the stage of the Indian history which was in a state of flux. It is not unlikely to expect cultural clashes during this period. The evidence of such clashes fill the pages of the Purānas.

Cultural transmission of trends take time to be recognised as realities, and unlike political revolutions, mark no definite time of exact demarca- tion. But such cultural impact on so large a scale could not just have taken place without serious reasons. The steady growth of heavy commer cial transaction with the littoral cultures flourishing around the Arabian Sea, must have made a permanent economical impact on this giant land mass dominating an ocean named after it. Their commercial past contributed to engender a solid trust-base in favour of India. The new immigrants, who thus brought about an economic revolution in India, had faith in the friendliness and fair-play of the local people. This urban flood of immigrants wiped out the quiet Tapovana-culture of an agrarian forest-motivated society and pushed it up towards a new horizon where a kind of city-culture emerged with new codes, new Gods, new myths and a new life-rhythm. India, no longer Aryävarta or Brahmävarta, or Jambu-dvipa, became Bharatavarsa, and evolved a new society-the Hindu Society.

But it is noticeable that it is during this second period of inundation of foreign culture that Indian theological masters, Hindu law-makers and celebrated philosophers were working very hard to organise a new society emerging out of the hard core of Vedism into a Bharatiya (Indian) culture of Sanatana Hinduism which, based as it had been firmly in the Vedas, evolved new forms, laws, codes of ethics, policy and discipline as illustrated in the multitude of Puränas written during this period. The original Vedic laws regarding Varna and Asrama, rights of women and forms of marriages were experiencing a hard time under some non-Vedic pressures.

The very use of the word Hinduism was a novelty in a society where Veda, Vedism, Ärya were the only terms, apart from the Anäryas, or Mlecchas. The use of the word Sanatana, perhaps, attempted to em- phasise and idolise the link with the ancient Vedic tradition. In other words howsoever deep the changes were, the new trends were acceptable only when

linked with the Vedas. Sanätana Hinduism by definition indi- cated the accommodation of strains which were not entirely Vedic in the strict sense. This is no wonder. The Atharvan as a new Veda was accepted into the family of the three Vedas, the Trayf.

Of that later. But the new society did establish old gods, in new shapes, and defined their forms, and codified their rituals. Siva emerging out of Indra and Agni, and absorbing much of Varuna's special features and Vayu's skill become the God of Gods (Devadeva) the Great God (Mahd- deva).

The austric paleolithic fertility gods and goddesses, and the phallic oriental rituals left their mark on some of the ancient Tamil tradition of Saivism, which sublimated the ancient proletariat naturalism on the one hand, and absorbed the new trends on the other,
without having to deviate from its Siva concept, and its purity. This form accepted the in-depth import of Saivism. It blossomed into the great Bhakti-system despite its urbanity and temple-mindedness. The Pasupata-Bhairava trend grew apart from this. A third form grew into the great cult of Skanda- Subrahmanya of which we shall speak later. Obviously certain foreign features would be found noticeable within the existing traditions.
Depending on the degree of the culture evidenced by religious observances and forms of worship, depending on the disciplinary training emphasised in spiritual life, as opposed to the local indulgences in orgiastic rites, these foreign features in religious rites posed further complexities. But, apart from such fringe-deviations, and historically preserved ritualistic islands of culture, the revolution of monistic Saivism out of Vedism is a subject of engrossing interest to a scholar of Hindu culture.
The six 'system' record the germinal purposiveness of this effort. Sämkhya and Vaišeşika particularly help follow Hindu Saivism. The system of Tantra itself becomes merged into it as milk does in honey. The Puranas again and again record through legends the story of this evolution. The Analytical approach of the Vedanta system which spelled a deadly blow to Buddhism, and which threw a new light over the Tantra and Vedic rites, helped Saivism to grow into a composite idealist system, which attacked nothing, but which involved all. Vedanta thus makes us appreciate the basis of Saivism, which the Hindus insistently distin- guish from the phallic fertility cults, or the orgiastic blood and fire cults. These latter shady forms still flourish side by side. These too are con- tained within the umbrella of Hinduism, but pure Saivism of the Hindus stands apart and above the cults.

It is in the Purana-myths where we must go to discover the story of this absorbing synthesis between the old and the new, between one branch of Vedic people and another branch; between the pure Indian and alien trends.

To know and understand the complex labyrinth that is Hinduism no scholar, without seriously damaging his objective, could avoid a deep study of these myths, if not of the Puranas. It is indeed an exercise in utter futility to try to know the Greeks without the Iliad and the Odessey, the Spanish without Don Quixote, the Arabians without Shaharezadi and her Alf-Laila-e-Laila,, the English without Shakespeare and Dickens, the Europeans without Goethe and Voltaire, the modern social problems without Marx, and the Indians without the Mahabharata and the Purana-myths. So we proceed to the myths.

II VRTRA-ANGIRA and TVASTA

Indra Insults Bṛhaspati

In order to illustrate our point we shall narrate an important legend. It is the legend of the demon Vetra and his destruction by Indra, the King of the gods. The legend involves, amongst others, Atharvan (otherwise also known as Angira, the priest, of Agni) Dadhici-Toasta-Vilva- rupa-Indra-Vytra. Each of these names is connected with the other.

It appears that Atharvan-Angira, a sage-son of the first patriarch (a version of Moses) Kasyapa and Aditi, differed from all the others on his insistence of applying spiritual power for material benefits. He was thus the organiser of the fire worship, known as Tajña (probably distin- guished from Kratu). Angira had two sons by his wife Citti. These were Dadhici and Aśvasira. We shall note that both the sons played significant part in Assyrian culture. These names are traceable in the Rg Veda where the war between Vetra and Indra occupies some memorable passages of poetical beauty. In the later Puranas, in the Epics, the legend has claimed equal importance. Therefore this legend must have some important significance.

Similarly significant legends are (1) the Churning of the Ocean; (2) the Sacrifice of Daksa Prajapati; (3) the Descent of the Ganges; (4) the Birth of Ganesa; and (5) the traditions regarding Skanda.

Indra is hailed as a vanquisher of Vrtra. In his role as the King of the Devas, Indra had to fight many battles. But this fight with Vrtra played a very important role inasmuch as it made a very important section of the Asuras submit to a Vedic way which did synthesise with some of the ways of the Asuras as propounded by Atharvan.

Who was this Vṛtra? Indra, we know. He is one of the most impor- tant Devas. He is the chosen King. He has been praised very high in the Upanisad as one who had mastered the Brahmavidya." He is known to be the only one who had completed the Horse-Sacrifice no less than a hundred times. He is the Supreme God of the Vedas, where Varuna or Vayu or even Agni have subordinate roles to play. He is the Cloud-Lord Parjanya, the thunder-wielder, the bringer of the rains. He symbolises the Vedas, and Aryanism generally.

But who was this Vrtra, and why and how did he become the arch enemy of the Devas? This takes us to a very interesting legend. We shall relate it. But it has a number of ramifications. We shall number these ramifications one by one, and then take them up, only to be mar- shalled later to a climax. Thereafter we shall try to interpret the his-toricity and the cultural tradition underlying the legendary form.

Once in his court-hall Indra with friends was being entertained by the divine dancer Urvasi and her troupe. So engrossing was the dance that Indra did not notice his official preceptor Brhaspati enter the court; and he did not leave his throne to pay him his due
regard.

This annoyed Brhaspati. In protest he resigned the divine com- mission of priesthood. He knew that security and wealth give power; and power brews tyranny; and a tyrant forgets manners, discipline and humility.

But Indra needed a priest. He approached Brahmä for advice. Brahma suggested the name of Viśvarûpa. Viśvarůpa was the grandson of Kasyapa and Aditi, and son of the celestial mechanic Tvaştă. Besides having taken to the profession of a mechanic and a metal-worker he married into the clan of the Asuras who were too much enamoured of worldly power, and relied more on machines. Racană (construction and plan of construction) was the name of Tvasta's wife. From this marriage he had two sons: Sannivela (Blue-Print) and Vilvarúpa (the forms of the universe). He also had a daughter, Saranyu (an abode; a protected place) by name.

Although born of Kasyapa, because they followed the sage Angirå Atharvan, who was their grand-father, they were treated as different; as dissidents. This dislike of Atharvan was based on what was propoun- ded as Atharvan's way, and which concerned Life here; Rg Vedic way set the goal for a great future life. Devas, the blue-blooded aristocracy of the Aryans, abhorred material prosperity, and professionalism as a means to power. Though all born of Kasyapa and Aditi were Brahmins and Devas, Tvasta's postion as a Deva was thus compromised by his being a craftsman. To add to this Racanã, his wife, followed the spiritual way as preached by Atharvan Angira, who was a sage, and a brother of Tvaşti, who followed the way of Atharvan-Angira.

Tvaşta was the heavenly mechanic who shaped horses, men and various other forms of the world. This is why at any honeymoon or hymeneal rites Tvastă is invoked. He is requested to shape the ejected sperm placed within the embryo into a shapely form by his forging power. Tvastă is a friend of the fellow artisans of the non-god clans known as the Rbhu-s (followers of Angira and Siva). Although rivals, their relations improved gradually.

Tvaşta was the same as Vilvakarman of the Puranas. Tvaşță gene- rated fire through a friction between heaven and earth. This fire came to be adored by Angira and his Asura people. With Agni (fire) Tvastă produced out of the same frictional operation two side-issues; Varuna (the waters) and Bhrgu (the celestial bodies).

His association with pagan myths is evidenced by the fact that his name occurs in the list of the names of the days of the week.

Days	Pagan Deities	Hindu-Names
Tues-day	Tuisto	Tvasta
Wednes-day	Woden	Budha
Thurs-day	Thor	Brhaspati
Fri-day	Frig	Bhrgu (Sukracarya)

These names indicate certain inferences. (1) The days are associated with the science of dividing or measuring time. (2) All of this is astrology. (3) Except Brhaspati all other names refer to the Asura people who broke away from the Vedic path. Of those who did, Vṛtra was a leader. His story takes us to Dadhici.

The Angira-Atharvans

We have been speaking of Kasyapa and his son Tvasta, and of Tvasta's involvements and family. The next legend relates to the significant figures of the Angirasas. Atharvan and Angira are the same person. Some say they were father and son. In any case the names represent the same tradition.

Atharvan has his own Veda. Although many ignore it as a Veda, its influence on rituals is immense. Vedas are three; but the Atharvan was admitted as a Veda later. Atharvan believed in invoking fire in Yajñas for such sacrificial rites as would bestow worldly gains. The Rg Veda, in contrast, was other-worldly. Rg Vedic rites are more elaborate with three representative priests for the three Vedas; and a Brahma is appointed to remain in charge of the rites. Atharvan is mystic, magical and worldly. In the Atharva-rites we get only a single priest; and the Atharvan sacrificial esoterism includes astrologic invocations, The followers of Rg Vedic rites called themselves the Devas, as opposed to the Asuras, who followed, principally the Atharvan rites. Yet there are instances when each has been found to honour the other. "It may be said that the Atharva Veda represents a current of

Indian culture that runs parallel to the current represented by the other Vedas; and that it is the earlier stage of a current." that ultimately blossomed into the Agama, or the Siva literature; and Tantra, the mystic literature.

'Atharvan' as a term signified 'intellectual acumen. For a correct estimation of this intellectual standard two references could be made (1) The Hymns of Dirgha-tamas (an Atharvan-follower, son of Brhaspati), (2) Kalidasa in Raghuvamsa praises Vasistha as an Atharva-Nidhi, a repository of Atharvan knowledge.

In fact, today, in Hinduism the conflicting aspects have totally ceased to be high-lighted; today the Atharvan-school has become a solid part of the Hindu culture. But that should not make us forget the days in very distant past when Rg Veda spurned Atharva Veda; and when the Devas of Rg Veda considered the followers of Atharvan as renegades, dichards and dissenters. These last were indeed the Asuras of the Puranas.

Fire-rite, (1) then, of a special kind was the strong point of the Angirä- Atharvans. Tvasta, a family contemporary of Angirä, perhaps his brother, found fire by rubbing the firmament and the planet earth (Dydvd-Prthivi) together." (2) Thus generated, this Fire took many forms. Angira classified fire in the rites as well as in its daily uses. Fire that generates life in the sperm; fire that envelops the womb and the foetal-fluid; fire that sets the menses; fire that digests food and draw vitality from it; fire that cooks; fire that germinates seeds and develops the plants, and sends juice and seeds to the fruits; fire that
is stored in wood; fire that is used in sacraments in wedding; in cremation, etc., etc. 18 These were classified and given significant names. Indra had ousted Varuna (water-Uranus) and Mitra (Mithra-Apollo); Agni (fire-Ignus: compare Hestia and Delphic Hemphalos) ousted Indra. Naturally, this was a case of conflict.

Thus it was given to Angira-Atharvan the great sage, to analyse the functions of fire, and start a movement of adoring fire, and get fire invoked at most of the sacramental rites. He started to organise great Yajñas (sacrificial rites) where animals were offered in expectations of boons. These, known as Kratus, were distinct from the Vedic Yajñas. The commons were all in favour of Kratus. So great was Atharvan's popularity and appeal that

his ways spread to other non- Aryans as the Yaksas, Kinnaras and Gandharvas, 17 This trend was being opposed by some Aryans who looked upon such rites of materialistic Yajñas to be no better than magic and sorcery. The Atharvans could have been the Magi of the Bible, because the area over which Atharvan had his sway was the Asura-land, probably Sumeria and Babylonia where the Assyrian culture had made its mark. That the Atharvan astrological rites were practised in, and are still much in favour with these parts, is no longer doubted. From Egypt to Iran spells and magic still form a large part of spiritual belief.

The Devas resented this; and found it moral to oppose it. The Asuras had their Agni (fire); the Devas had their Brahma. Angira had two important disciples: Brhaspati and Bhrgu. Although Brhaspati went over to the Devas as their priest, many of his own blood like Dirgha-tamas, Utathya, Sukra, Kavi, Ušana, Durväsä, Dadhici and others were known as masters of the Atharvan-way. Atharvan had thus a great intellectual following. But the Devas still held him and his disciples, the Asuras as inferior. The list of the Rsis and spiritualist who followed the Angira- way is indeed an imposing one.

Tvasta, an Angirasa by birth, married amongst the dissident Asuras and had two sons: Akvašira (also known as Hayalirsa), and Dadhici. Both were powerful spiritualists.
Besides the sons, he had a daughter Saranyu. Her legend is more than merely interesting. The echoes of Saranyu's plights are found in Pagan literature also (see Erinnys in Homer; violation of Alcippe in Greek Myths).

The Horse-headed God

Before passing on to the next chapter of the legend, another point about Angira-Atharvan must be borne in mind. He is associated with many animal forms to be adored. Of such zoomorphic deities a Horse- deity was held in great honour. There are various references to the adoration of a horse-faced deity, Haya-Grisa, mentioned in the Puranas, as an incarnation of Visnu. We shall note that this was the area where Bull, Boar, Fish, Fowl have been deified.

There is an interesting legend about a Horse-deity in Devi-Bhaga- vatam which must now be reserved for future narration. Now we continue our story of Dadhici and Indra.

Dadhici, as we have noted, was a great spiritualist on his own. He did not much conform to the Angira-way. So, in order to win him over Indra himself taught him the secrets of a special type of armour known as Narayana-Kavaca.21

To follow this legend of Dadhici and the Narayana-Kavaca we have to know the legend of Saranyu, the daughter of Tvasta. For the second time we leave Dadhici, and go to a third legend.

Saranyu and Vivasvan

The Sun-god, Vivasvän known for his generative urge, was married to Saranyu. She found herself quite incapable of bearing the urging de- mands of the ever-hot Sun. She wanted to get away from his continuous procreative urge. She, a daughter of Tvasta, was herself no mean a mechanic. She constructed another girl, exactly her replica (Savarna), and even infused life into her. Leaving this girl Savarna (a Replica) to help her out in the bed of the demanding Vivasvän, she took to her heels, and got lost. But before she could take her leave, she had borne Vivasvän three issues: a twin, Yama and Yami; and a son, the Ṛṣi Manu. Yama was appointed lord of the underworld; and Yami was left on the earth as the river Yamuna to be of service to lives on earth. Vaivasvat Manu became the original law-giver for the Devas.

Savarná too bore Vivasvän a son, who became the great Savarni- Manu. (One Manu gave one set of laws to the Aryans; but another Manu gave another set of laws for establishing and organising new sets of Aryans. Thus came many Manus.)

But the ruse of his daughter could not deceive her crafty and skilful father Tvastă. He missed his Saranyu, and enquired into the reasons for her strange disappearance. When he came to know of the ferocity of the approaches of his son-in-law he was much angered by the lack of consideration on the part of Vivasvän. He reported the matter to the Council of

the gods who thought it fit to get Vivasvän's urge a little clipped. This needed technical efficiency, and Tvastă himself was the specialist. Tvaştä, the mechanic, fixed Vivasvän on his great lathe- machine, and began to clip the vibrant halo of the Sun. (Out of the clippings collected from Vivasvän, Visnu's celebrated disc, the Sudarsana was manufactured.) The Sun (Vivasvän) since then has been satisfying himself with his rays clipped; no longer a continuous halo as before.

Now, with his vigour suitably reduced, he started a devoted search for Saranyu. He was informed that Saranyu was roaming incognito somewhere in Kuru Jangala disguised as a mare. At once Vivasvän assumed the form of a horse. The two had a good time. The new Vivasvän was found to Saranyu's liking. She lost herself in her new found joy. Tvastă himself was one of the gods invoked with the other sage Siniväll at the time of her conception, both of them being accepted as skilful experts efficient in setting proportional limbs and frame to the body, and adding comeliness to the features." Saranyu and Viśvarupa were twin children of Tvasta. Saranyu continued a characteristic. She had already begotten a twin, Yama and Yami, to Vivasvän before he was lathed. This time too, when Vivasvän had approached her mare-form in the shape of a horse, she gave birth to a
twin: two boys, Nasatya and Dasra, who would remain bachelors, and who would, as the Aivins, the pair (like the Homerian Dias Kouri) become the professional surgeons and medical advisers to the gods. Asvins were the most beautiful of the gods. But again, they were not allowed the full status of gods. They just remained memorised as stars, like Bhrgu, Agastya, Vasistha, Angiră, etc. (cf., legend of Cyavana and Sukanya.)

(This legend has many versions: (1) Rg Veda; (2) Nirukta; and (3) Brhaddevata. This legend bears a great importance to the introduction of a number of gods who appeared for
a while in the Vedic culture, only to be completely removed from the pantheon later, leaving place to the stalwarts like Visnu (Indra) and Siva (in whom Rudra and Agni survived.)

Any one reading the legend of the Homeric goddess Erinnys might observe the similarities. The legend of the Advins could be read against the one of Castor and Pollux, known also as the mystic Diaskouri. Pollux and Helen were the progenies of Zeus by Leda, the wife of Tyndareus of Sparta. Leda's children by Tyndareus were Castor and Clytemnestra. Thus Leda bore four children by two different men. Saranyu too, bore four, though by the same one, yet in two forms. Saranyu's sons were adored as bachelors; so were Leda's; Saranyu's sons were awarded celestial honour amongst the stars; so were Leda's.

Dadhici: Trilira or Vṛtra: Indra (Contd.)

Now to go back to our legend again:

Tvaşta had another son Aśvasira (Horse-Head). This one, as we have already noted, was very popular amongst the Asuras. But Dadhici was different, and was more inclined to the Vedic ways. In order to keep him pleased, Indra had rewarded him with the special power, the Nārāyaṇa-Kavaca.

Tvasta and Angira were two of the original Prajapatis. As such, they were brothers of Indra too. The Asvins were, thus, Tvasta's grand- sons through his daughter Saranyu. These grandsons, having come to learn of some favour gained by Dadhici became interested to know what it was. Their inquisitiveness was irresistible. Old Dadhici was moved by the insistence of his petted grandchildren.

But Dadhici had promised Indra to keep the secret to himself, and not part with it to the Asuras. But the Aśvins were not Asuras. So by imparting the secret to them he would not break a pledge.

Dadhici was a conscientious individual. He knew that the young Asvins were too fond of the clan of Tvasta. His secret was exclusively a Deva-weapon. So he hesitated. He was afraid of Indra, lest he dis- covered some breach, and retaliate. The Asvins promised to give him the necessary protection.

In order to protect Dadhici from the wrath of Indra, Aśvins, the celes- tial surgeons, took recourse to a ruse. They changed Dadhici's head to that of a horse's; and kept the original head well preserved. Dadhici was asked to pass his days in Kurukşetra where he would not be recognised. Soon Indra discovered how the Asvins made a fool of Dadhici. He sought him out at Kurukşetra and cut down the head of the traitor. That caused the world little worry, as the Asvins had the original head ready for grafting. Dadhici became himself again, and left for Heaven, where Indra lived.

During the period of hiding of Dadhici the Asuras had become very powerful, and had occupied the whole earth. When Indra should have consolidated his power, he had quarrelled with Brhaspati. With both Brhaspati and Dadhici now gone, and Angira and Bhrgu against him, Indra had to look for an efficient priest. We have seen that at Brahma's advice Indra had appointed Viśvarúpa as his priest. This, again deve- loped a more dangerous crisis.

Visvarupa's death: Viśvarúpa was appointed by Indra to be his priest in place of Brhaspati. He did not like being a priest. He condemned priestism as a degradation for the Brahmanas. 23 But Indra begged. Both Angira and Tvaṣṭă approved. Viśvarûpa, who had three heads, agreed. And in his Yajñas offered shares, along with the usual Devas, also to the Asuras who were his maternal uncles. In fact, to be sure he shared their portion even before the Devas got theirs. This was indeed anti-Vedic, and anti-social. Even though a Brahmana, Viśvarûpa had acted anti- Brähmanically. As Indra discovered this, he spent no time. He just cut off the three heads of Viśvarůpa by a single stroke. In no time in this way he had shed Brahmin blood twice. He would have to do it a third time very soon. A

Brahmin was again killed. At first it was Dadhici; now it is Viśvarupa. Tvaşta could not bear it any more. His cousin, Hayasîrṣa, was condemned as a worshipper of horse; his grandsons, Däsra and Näsatya, from Saranyu too were just undergraded as stars, the Asvins. Never has his blood gained the full status of the Devas. And now his great

grandson Viśvarûpa had been done to death. The power of Indra had outreached itself, and must be curbed in the interest of the intellectuals. He started a great penance for the annihilation of the Devas, particularly of Indra, the murderer of his son.

Tvasta's penance was indeed worthy of so faithful a fire-devotee as himself, and a brother-devotee of Angira. Moreover, he had learnt the Nārāyaṇa secret from the Akvins. He, now armed with Indra's secret, started an Indra-killing sacrifice which would use Angirä-methods and the Nārāyaṇa-Kavaca both. The Fire-god, pleased at his penance, gave him a great grandson. He was Vṛtra. He was to lead the Asuras to victory. Vṛtra was considered invincible because Tvaşta had covered him with Nārāyaṇa-Kavaca; and soon the world was to know this. The Asuras were everywhere. The Devas were cornered, and exiled. They had practically faded out. The entire civilised world had accepted the Asuras as the Lords. The great Vedic Yajñas had all been stopped. The Angira- way, and the Bhrgu-way alone ruled the world. Atharva Veda was supreme.

Indra took counsel with Brahma. He only rebuked Indra for his indiscretions, and for under-rating the Brahmanical power even if the Brahmana happened to be of the community of Atharva Angiră, such as Tvasta, Bhrgu, Šukra, Utathya, Agastya, etc. He had shed the blood of Dadhici; he had beheaded his own anointed priest Viśvarůpa. Due to his bad manners Brhaspati had already left him. He was indeed in a sad plight. Brahma actually snubbed the king of the gods.

The three heads of Viśvarúpa had fallen to three directions. The three heads had three names: Soma-Pitha; Súra-Pitha and Annada. They fell in three regions and gave rise to different Bird-sects, which became known as fowl-worshippers (Suparna or Sikhi devotees). These were the lark-people (Kapiñjala); the sparrow-people (Kalabinka); and the guinea- fowl people (Tittiri). Viśvarûpa's power was, thus, not lost but multiplied. Was Viśvarupa's ways patronised by non-Vedic people?

(We have a story about Yajnavalkya, the author of Yajnavalkya Samhita, in Sukla-Yajurveda, Satapatha Brāhmaṇa, and Bṛhadaranyaka that, in a difference with his Guru Vaiśampayana, he 'vomitted' all he had learnt, and some guinea fowls (Tittira) ate it. These very 'fowls' later on expounded the lost Vedas. This, resultant recovery was compiled and known to be Taittiriya Upanisad. It appears that after a period of decadence, when the Rg Veda was lost, the Yajnavalkya version of the Vedas were recovered from the 'fowl' people. They might have not been of pure Aryan stock, yet Yajnavalkya found them fit to be admitted into the Vedic knowledge. He taught them what he had learnt, and 'swallowed'; and they, taught by him, picked that up. His insistence of spreading the Vedas amongst 'other people' might have aroused Vaisam- payana's anger.)

The 'only helper' in this state should be a son of Atharvan Angirä himself. He was Dadhici. In him the fire-cult has been synthesised with the Nārāyaṇa-power. And now that he has been in a continuous penance for years, his spiritual power alone could provide the answer. He has to part with his body and empower Indra with his power.

Indra went to Dadhici. Dadhici made little of his personal sacrifice. The Vedic way could not be destroyed. It was too precious a heritage to be humiliated by a materialistic power. World-peace would for ever be jeopardised if the Vedic spiritual idealism were to perish under the dominance of materialistic power, show and pride. He set himself to a trance and gave up his life. He transmitted his power to Indra, and strengthened him. Through his own Yogic skill he transferred his power, which was the power of Agni-Nārāyaṇa, into his bones. His body fell without life.

The combined power of Agni and Nārāyaṇa in Dadhici's bones urged Indra to device weapons out of the bones. This was to be his thunder, the Vajra. It made Indra very powerful, for his Vajra was charmed.

The confrontation came. Vetra did not have the required Power to fight the Dadhici-force, which was implanted in Indra's Vajra. The weapons made out of Dadhici's bones were infallible. Despite his great spiritual power, he resigned himself to a final sacrifice. He

would fight Indra to his shame, and to the excellence of his own glory. The fatal final war began. Indra, fortified with the Vajra (Tantra) power confronted Vṛtra's Nārāyaṇa Power. Indra struck the first blow. Vrtra lost his left hand first; then his right hand. Still he advanced with his inouth spread wide open towards Indra, and swallowed him with his chariot and the weapons. Indra, Mantra, Vajra and all entered his stomach. Creation held its breath. But Indra had discharged his weapon, the one taught by Dadhici. This, like a wheel, went round and round within Vrtra's belly. It took a full year, 360 days, for Vrtra's head to sever from his body.

But he died a reconciled hero. He welcomed the new Indra armed with the Vajra from Dadhici. He was glad that he had recognised and realised the supremacy of the Angirasa fire-power, which he had accepted from Dadhici, and with which he had accepted the worship of the Nārāyaṇa-armour. Vṛtra himself was a devotee to the principles; and although he was ready to die, he knew through the transformation of Indra, that the way of his father and brother (Tvaşta and Viśvarůpa) has come to supersede the exclusive pride of Indra, and his society of Devas. (Vajra-A Tibetan-Tantric symbol of cosmic coitus.)

The underlying cultural history which forms the basis of this complex of many legends is not very difficult to read. The steady growth of popularity of the Fire-cult, with its faith in materialistic prosperity stood in direct disregard of the Rg Vedic Aryan values which held the Nature- gods as their only deities with the Sun as their chief. Moreover, spiritual aspiration for them led to peace hereafter. They, in contrast, with eso- terism, cultivated a spiritual life which later found its full expression in the Upanisads.

Historians have sometimes insisted on the conquistador tendencies of the Aryans, who have been known to have remained the mortal enemies of a pre-Aryan (or non-Aryan) urban civilisation. By inference, from the archaeological finds and literary references, these historians have classi- fied the Aryans as Agrarian nomads and gypsies. This latter description of the Aryans have always remained a source of irritation to the classicists among the Indian scholars.

Naturally so. Study of the Epics and the Puranas do not conform to a gypsy life at all. On the contrary, such studies reveal conflict; ethical as well as material conflicts, between two sets of the said Aryans. They were the same people; they separated on principles of ideology of life, The Tvasta, Angira, Atharvan group had been one class. In the Bhagavata Purana we have on record a list of the Atharvan followers up to the narrator of the Mahabharata, namely Sûta.

This list, and similar lists in other Puranas, signify that Atri, Bhrgu, Angira, Pulastya, Pulaha were of a group. Vasistha is a Vedic Ṛṣi. But in Rg Veda he, along with Agastya, has been classed as progenies, or followers of Mitra-Varuna. The 'seed' of Mitra brought them forth.

Bhrgu's son was Sukra; Atharvan and Brhaspati were sons of Angira. This list clearly shows that although the Prajapatis (clan-lords were Aryans of the same stock, groupings came later on; and the cause for grouping was ideological difference: materialistic realism versus spiritualistic idealism. The Vedas represented the latter; and the Epics and the Purāṇas re- presented the former with Bhrgu, Sukra, Parāśara, Vyasa, Vaisampayana and Sûta holding the tradition of chronicling the events relating to this conflict. In Vasistha the transformation or synthesis becomes complete, as Vasistha, together with Agastya is said to have imbibed the spirit of Mitra and Varuna, who are identified with the Atharvan group and Mith- raism of the Assyrian ancients. Indra and Bṛhaspati had misunderstanding.

Due to this, Trisira- Viśvarupa was called for

performing a Yajña with a specific motive. Viśva- rupa was well versed in Sama, Rg and Yajur: hence the three heads. But his way was the Asura-way, which Bṛhaspati avoided to get involved into.

Tvasta's way through Viśvarûpa was influencing the Aryans. But the Indra-People would keep the Angira-Atharvans away as inferiors. When the Indra-people or the Devas discovered this mixture taking place through the Atharvan-system, the conflict assumed a crisis signified by the beheading of Viśvarupa. The Tvastas were very popular as they

extolled craftsmanship, and held craftsmen as important as the Brahmanas. The Fire or the Veda they worshipped was the product of Heaven and Earth rubbed together; Idealism and Materialism synthesised.

The Tvasta-people, Asuras that is, realised that for the development of civilisation of culture the earthly and the ethereal have to be vigorously synthesised. Then alone the fullness of Life could be served.

When we read the names of the three heads, we realise how this new way was being popularised universally amongst the Devas as well as the Asuras. The heads 'fell' amongst the 'birds'; we realise that sacrifice through Soma was followed by the Kapinjalas; sacrifice through wine (Sura) was followed by the Kalavinkas; and sacrifice by silence, or silent meditation (A-Nada Non-sound) was followed by the Tittiras. Vedism was not restricted to the Aryans thanks to Tvaşta and Viśvarûpa.

We hear of Yajnavalkya's difference with Vaisampayana, and his abandonment of his people on a point of ritualistic difference. In that incident we read of the probable fact that Yajnavalkya's learning was accepted by the Tittira people who composed the Taittiriya Upanisad. This incident read with the three heads of Viśvarupa tells its own tale.

Atharvan thus grows into an opinion followed by many, and cultivated over a wide area. Out of Atharvan came the Horse-cult, the Bull-cult, the Boar-cult, all of which were synthesised with special sacrifices (Kratu), Vinu as the Supreme form of Yajna in the form of Hayagriva, Vṛsä- Kapi, Varaha, Nara-simha and other Zoomorphic forms began to be honoured under Atharvan's great spiritual guidance; and the presence of similar deities both in the Assyrian world and the Tamil world makes the popularity of Atharvan, Agastya and Kapila in these parts significant. Atri, Dattatreya and Märkandeya were the other important leaders of these people. If Brhaspati did not join this group directly, his own blood-clans like Dirghatamas and Utathya did.

Dadhici was one of these. The legend of his daughter in a mare form and of the Sun in a horse form only justifies the spread of the Tantric cult of horse worship amongst the

Atharvan people. They were known as Hai-hayas and Kakatiyas, who have been known to be confirmed Atharvan followers of the Rudra and Siva way of religious thoughts. The Horse-cult involves the Näsatya Asvins, and through them, also the astrology-loving zodiacal people. These as the Moon-people would accept the Siva way, as Šiva has been known to have found favour with the Moon-people. He is known as Candra-Sekhara, the Moon-Crowned (God).

The legend of Vivasvän and Saranyu justifies the popularity of the Asvins, the Horse-cult, Hayagriva, Haihayas and the underlying synthesis in Hinduism of the conflict between Atharvan and the three Vedas. It is clear that the later Visnu-way is a growth from the original Vivasvän-way which proved to be a way spiritually too powerful to be practised by a section of the society. The Sun-cult itself became the Visnu-cult, and this was done through the way that the Tvaştä-Angirä-Atharvan people had shown. In the legend Tvaşta sizes up Vivasvän, and constructs the Cakra-Sudarsana out of the 'Clippings' from Vivasvan's power.

Now, Indra's or Veda's secrets were known to Tvaşṭă, Dadhici and the Horse people, who followed the Aśvins. Vṛtra, the leader of this Atharvan way of life, was about to demolish the Vedic way. In fact, through him the world came under the Atharvan way. It was only this great synthesis of Veda, Fire and Visnu that the Nārāyaṇa-Kavaca symbolised in the post-Vṛtra society. The Vṛtra legend is a victory of the Indra-way over a dedicated materialistic way; but the
victory was earned only when Dadhici's Tantric way was accepted as symbolised by the acceptance of the 'Vajra'.

Saivic way was an acceptance of the fire-worshippers of the Atharvan, who were popular also amongst the non-Aryan Ganas, Siddhas, Gandhar- vas and Yaksas, as also amongst the Vedic worshippers of self-realisation.

Vrtra himself has been described as one highly gifted in spiritualism. Dadhici's power working through Indra alone limited Vrtra's progress. First his progress was cut down, and limited in the East; then in the West; but a time came when Vrtra and his way, the way of Angira-Atharvan, had swallowed all the Aryan world. The Atharvan became the fourth Veda. Vyasa confirmed it. It took some time before the Ancient Vedic way could 'cut through' this influence; and the glory of the Rg Veda was again recognised, only in the new Vajra-form.

But this glory was recognised only along with Atharvan. Never again in many names. was it said that the Vedas were three; or that Fire cannot be worshipped Fire had come to stay in the Atharvan-rites; and this was done through the aid of the Yakṣas, Kinnaras, Ganas, Siddhas, Guhya- kas, Palhavas, Šakas, etc., who were not Aryans. Fire was accepted as a part of Siva. Saivism had come to stay. The legend of Skanda ex- poses the synthesis of the Fire-cult and the Rudra-cult in every respect.

III-A

Daksa's Sacrifice

There is the legend of Dakşa Prajapati, a Patriarch of patriarchs, all of whose daughters were married to reputed Aryans. But one of his daughters wanted to espouse Siva; and did so against the will of her parents, and to the disgrace of the proud father, as well as of the community. Siva was not a Deva. He was not Vedic; and his ways, his social involvements, his philosophy of life were considered to be anti-Vedic, and certainly anti-aristocratic.

Dakṣa felt humiliated by this rebellious marriage and vowed never to receive the daughter home again; neither to show Siva the regard due to a son-in-law. In order to display his avowal, and prove his integrity to the Deva-society he organised a sacrifice, and invited all the Devas. He knew well how Siva disliked these Vedic rituals that engendered snobbery, sophistry and vanity, above all, of the proud and arrogant indulgence of Brahmanas in polemics. Saivism meant universal equality, and respect for a life of honest labour. It

believed in a frank and square way of accept- ing life. Thus the ways of Siva presented a composed, self-contented, peaceful husband, and a non-interfering son-in-law. He did not feel it necessary to take cognisance of the provocation of the slight.

But traditionally Rudra, if not Siva, was one of the participants in a 'Sacrifice'; and in all sacrifices Rudra's share of honour had been prescrib- ed by the Vedic Ṛsis. Dakṣa, in his arrogance, and in order to accentuate the slight, refused to arrange for Rudra's traditional share. By doing so he disowned publicly the popular acceptance of Siva's ways as well as those of the Rudra followers. The Ṛsis and the Devas opposed this cancellation; but were overwhelmed by Dakṣa's insistence. Sati, the daughter of Daksa, and wife of Śiva, felt the slight. She reacted like a real Aryan lady. She was stung by the realisation that the slight to Siva was parti cularly prompted by her rebellious marriage to Siva. Determined to bring an atonement for the undeserved humiliation, she raced to her father's home, despite Siva's advice to refrain from reacting to senseless sophistry and snobbery. But Sati had her way, as all women have; and presented herself uninvited at an arrogant and snobbish father's home. Dakşa, the proud aristocrat, felt satisfied to feel his game producing the desired effect. Siva, the guilty, must have been touched to the quick, he thought. Then, before the select public assemblage of all the top- Devas, he let loose a tirade of insults well-aimed at Satî's revered and beloved husband and Lord. Sati realised how by coming, and attending the ceremony, she had exposed her Lord's honour to the ridicule of all. Out of deep remorse she condemned the proud exclusive ways of the high and mighty, who, however, were not mightier than Siva. To prove her point she assumed a Yoga-Asana, and through Yogic process gave up her life. (Some Puranas say she threw herself in the Sacrificial fire.) Thus she had atoned for not listening to her husband's advice.

The news infuriated Siva. He sent his hordes (Ganas)27 to destroy the sacrifice and break the pride of the Devas, and curb their snobbery. The Devas were no match for Siva's hordes. The sacrificial ceremony itself broke up into a pandemonium, and all the spectacular arrange- ments of the Devas was reduced to a shambles. Dakṣa himself was decapitated. 28

From this point the legend continued in two different streams. The first of these streams relates that the wife of Daksa approached Siva, and begged him to revive her husband in her interest. Siva the noble, the ever-compassionate, the friend of the mortified, obliged her by effecting a surgery. Dakṣa's trunk was sewn up with a Pasu's head, i.e., an animal's head. (Paśu means an 'animal'). Dakṣa, the proud class-conscious aristocrat, would henceforth carry a goat's head on a human trunk. (Siva was called tauntingly a Pasupati, an Animal-chief, by the Devas. Ever and ever Siva wore the honorific Pasupati as his love for animals of all classes.) (cf., Siddhanta' on 'Pasu,' 'Pasa,' and 'Pati.")

The other stream of the legend relates that Siva carried on his shoulders the corpse of his beloved spouse. Out of great grief he roamed and roamed over the Universe. Like an ancient masculine version of Joana la Loca of Castille, with the dead body hung across his shoulder. Deprived of Siva's attention and benign care, entire creation was suffering from the cracks of disintegration, when Viṣṇu, with his discus, cut from a distance the corpse, piece by piece, and the grief-laden Siva discovered too late what had been done. Silently he went back to his penance again. After ages and ages when he espoused a daughter of the Mount Himalaya, he knew Sati had come back to him in another body. Never did the two part again.

It is needless to interpret elaborately this simple allegory. The Suras wanted to humiliate the Asuras. The Vedic people defied the Angirasas. One of the daughters of the Suras joined the Angirasa fire-worshippers who had accepted for their worship the Siva form, popular amongst those non-Aryan People who had joined the forces of Angira-Atharvan. A show down was inevitable. The Angirasas were successful in having their ways of Fire-oblations, popularised amongst the Gandharvas, Yaksas, Kin- naras, Gaṇas, Nagas, Kirātas and a host of other people. These were Saivic. In the marriage of Sati with Siva we observe that the Saivic Rudra rites were wedded to Tantra-Sakti or the Agama rites. Agama and Veda were wedded into one. The Kapila-Angira-Bhrgu-Atharvan-way of religion was merged into the puristic Vedism through the efforts of Sati (the philosophy of regarding Power as the Reality, or as Prakrti's righteous -Sattva-Guna-expression).

The showdown resulted in a victory for the Siva-way. The use of animals for Yajña was resented. Those who indulged in it were graded as half animals. The Saivas, too, now chastened and reformed by the Angirasas, stood as a symbol of universal brotherhood and enemies of exclusiveness. Again, the ancient Rg Vedic way of life had to come to terms with the Siva rites; and thereafter what followed was the result of this synthesis known as

Varṇāśrama, or Hinduism.

The gradual introduction and development in Hinduism of animals, totems, and symbolic companionship of animals, birds and insects with the deities, in a common conformity with the Egyptian, Sumerian and Iranian Zoomorphism, appears to be a post-Vedic feature. The body of Sati fell in 51 pieces all over India.30 Every where monuments were raised. These places became pilgrimages for the Sakti worshippers. It indicates that Saivism with the Sakti-cult, or the Agamas and Tantras, were spreading all over India. At each of these places, to this day, the devout maintain the tradition of synthesis of Agama and Veda through what has become Hinduism. These places are known as Devi-Pithas, the Seats of the Mother.

Characteristic of these legends, as of many others, celebrating the fact that they represent the mira- the holy places of India, culous powers as having pertained to the site of the sanctuary when it was still a wilderness. The conquering god of the Aryans arrived, experienced its wonder-working powers, discovered the old cult objects of the pre-Aryan culture (Sisna Deva of the Rg Veda) and bowed before it. This act effected a fusion of the ancient with the later cult; the local object of worship in the wilderness being thus symbolically accepted and absorbed by the newly-intro- duced North Indian sect-which itself was the product of an earlier syncretism."31

Zimmer has used strong words as 'bowed', 'accepted' and 'earlier' 'syncretism' along

with

words like 'fusion' and 'absorbed. The fact is that syncretism, as a historical inevitability, had been in progress as it must, like blood-circulation in a living body. Unless a few other instances of this glorious process of syncretism are related, this topic would not be fully illustrated. The instances are classic, and find places in all the Puranas and in the epic

Mahabharata. Most of these legends often relate to some Vedic texts. But their epical and Puranic chronicling are significant in literary dramatisations.

III-B

Taraka-War

The Siva-Sakti-legend leading to Siva's second espousal extends to yet another, but a very significant legend the Battle with the Asura named Taraka. This, like the elopement of Helen, or the inducement to the apple by Satan and the fall of Eve, is perhaps a key legend in Hindu myths.

Taraka, the Asura King, strengthened by a special boon from Brahmā became invincible. No one could defy him. Only a child of seven days was supposed to kill him just by one slap. Such was the boon. So, Taraka, the Asura, flourished unmolested.

Such a child must be born of special powers. The gods conferred, and decided that the union of the Sakti and the Rudra Powers alone could produce such a baby.

But Siva, bereaved and depressed (due to Sati's demise), had entered into a Samadhi and would not be disturbed. His own Ganas led by Nandi guarded all approaches. (This could suggest that for a period the Aryan way remained dominant, and the Saivic-non-Vedic (but primitive) tribal form had gone temporarily under a shade.)

In the meanwhile Sati, whose life with Siva had been severed, was born as Umd to Mena, wife of Himavän. Maināka was the brother of Umd, and son of Menă. She was endearingly called 'Parvati', the Mountain Maid. Her other names were Giri-jä (born of mountain); Haimavati (the Snow-girl). (Note the emphasis on Mountain-Maid; Kumari, the Virgin; and Gaurt, the White Goddess.)

She had two friends-Jaya and Vijaya (Success and Victory). With these two friends to assist her, she was merged in worshipping Siva, the Lord of the Mountain-people. She was resolved to marry no one but Śiva; and with the secret wish in her heart she visited his

hide- out, Kailasa, everyday, and offered him her worship, but without disturb- ing him in any way.

This gave the gods an idea. She, the incarnation of Sakti and Sati, should be married to Siva. Whereas as Sati she never bore a child, this time Śiva has got to be so aroused as to seek his spouse for a physical union, so that the child, so produced, would become a Siva-Sakti progeny.

To arouse Siva to such a passion was no joke. They approached Eros, the young god of Love, Kamadeva or Madana for that was his name. He was Visnu's son by Lakṣmi (Harivamsa) (Cupid was the son of Venus Aphrodite and Poseidon); but Taittiriya Brahmana says his father was Dharma and mother, Sraddha. His name Iraja, however, makes him born of water33 (son of Aphrodite?). He is known also as Aja (unborn), and Ananyaja (Born in self and of no other) which explains such other names as Atmabhû (born of self); or Manasija (born in mind). His wife was Rati (pleasure from union) also known as Reva (craving). He used the flower bow, and blossomed darts. His names and descrip- tions are so varied as carries his tracing steps through history and pre- history over Iran, Assyria, Babylon, Syria, Greece, Sumer, Rome and the Islands of the Mediterranean Sea. He had for his flag the sign of the 'fish', and for his pet the Apsaras (the beauty of the moving water). All these characteristics lead to the popular worship of a youthful god so well known to the myths of the orient.

He was asked to assist. He agreed to do this task in spite of the great risk involved, provided his friend Madhu (the Spring) helped, with his affections of seasonal voluptuousness expressed through captivating exotic blossoms and bird-calls. They made a team, and when Parvati, with Jaya and Vijaya on her either sides, was merged in her usual adora- tion to the Lord in trance, he asked Madhu to do his best and turn the couple's head. As the entire world in Kailasa pulsated in a hot heat of a passionate yearning, the bird and the animal world was electrified. Sex craved for its longing fulfilment. Parvati suddenly felt the change, and did not know what to do. She tried to control herself; but her embarrassment was obvious. Was she lascivious? Siva, too felt dis- turbed, and wanted to

know how the usual poise of the secluded Kailasa got disturbed. He opened his eyes and before spotting Pärvati and the two companions, spotted Kama aiming his infallible dart at him. Before the tender god could release the dart, Rudra, the terrible, turned him into a heap of ashes just with a look from his third fiery eye.

Then ignoring Pärvati totally, Siva left the place.

Naturally, Parvati was crest-fallen. She blamed herself for the entire incident, and decided to suffer a penance. She knew she had no option. Siva has to be hers solely and intimately.

Meanwhile the gods found that their plan had misfired. Rati lamented for her lord. She followed Siva and extracted from him a renewed life for her husband. He would remain active; but he himself would never be seen. Love would not be found in body any more. Love would ever remain a hidden longing in heart.

Parvati began to worship fire. Her penance, amidst flaming fire-pits, moved the heavens. Siva's trance had to be broken. He was being called by a devotee. When he arrived, he saw the pretty girl at almost her last stage of survival, awaiting her goal. He pretended as a common beggar to beg alms from her; but she knew. The two fell for each other. The great marriage was witnessed by the Devas.

The wedding over, all left; leaving the couple to themselves and to the next stage. Not Agni, the Fire-God (the lascivious Ram-faced Pan of the Greek myth). Too curious to watch the great union, he remained behind, disguised as a Crow.34 He could not resist watching the union of Śiva and Sakti. When Sakti spotted the intruder, she just shook in abash- ment, and Śiva knew. Śiva's sudden disengagement spilled the seed out. This fell in a reed bed, where a child was born with six heads. (In a later version we find 'seed', 'spill' and 'reed beds' unchanged; but for Śiva we have Agni.) Sakti attended to the Crying Child, i.e. Skanda (Rudra also means the 'wailing god'), and to his six faces, all at once, feeding each of the six mouths simultaneously from her six pairs of breasts. This gave the 'Six-in-One' constellation of Sakti (Astarte) the name Krttika (Pleiades), 35 (The Pleiades

inaugurates the yearly rainy-season.) One of Siva's names is "The Fire-seeded one': Kysanuretä.

In the Padma-Purana the Kṛttikās gave to the pregnant Sakti a specially anointed drink. She sipped from all the six members of the mother-group (Pleiades). From these six drinks she acquired a special Power. The Six Saktis burst into the right-flank of the mother and strengthened her womb, which came out by bursting the left side. "The burning child held in his hands powerful weapons, such as, Sakti, Lance, Hook and Flames (all characteristics of Siva). The fierce infant looked like burning gold. He was death to the Asuras. Since the Six-Mothers gave them the drinks, from each of the mouths (six) sprang various vegetations, due to which he was styled as Visakha (the branched one)" 36 This child appeared before Täraka as the leader of the Sura-army, and killed him with Sakti (a special weapon). But the legend of Kartikeya, Skanda, the killer of the Demon Taraka has many varieties. We deal with a few.

Henceforth Siva and Parvati remained as in a family with Kartikeya- His favourite ride was a fowl, a peacock, which lived Skanda as their son. by killing the serpents (Nagas). About their other son Gaṇeśa we shall speak later. (See a later Agni version of the legend, where Agni becomes the seed-giver.)

Skanda, the Great

If the Dakṣa legend shows that Saivism was a synthesis of Tantra (Agama) with Vedism, this one shows that Saivism is wedded to the Sakti cult of the mountain tribes, the river-cult of the bird-people, the fire-cult, and the Murugan cult of the Tamils. These five together with the Siva- rites account for the strange hexa-faced deity feeding upon Power. From the Mediterranean to the Gangetic lower Bengal every river mouth, rewarded with fertile deltas was the trading station for these Tamils. Along this world of commerce spread a cult known as the Skanda, or the Murugan cult. The Skanda cult was the result of a cohesive unit of the five cults of Bird, Fire, Water, Animal and the Mother. Soon this synthesis merged into Saivism, and became a part of it. Siva was project- ed as a family-

man. Fire (Agni), Bird (Murugan, Murg), Mother (Amma Uma) entered as one, in Hinduism, through the graceful image of Siva. The Skanda-cult is an important cult in the South of India, and forms an important branch of Saivism. It is characteristically cultivated in temples dominated by priests and disciples not always belonging to the It was originally non-Brāhmaṇical and non-Vedic; but it 'high' castes. is now regarded as an important branch of Brāhmaṇical Hinduism. Amongst the Serpent tribe (Nägas) which was an ancient totem-group, specially in the South of India, amongst the sea-hugging tribes, the Murugan cult is quite popular. A serpent-god has been traditionally worshipped by these tribes. Visnu was supposed to be anti-tribe. But Siva was a friend of the Nagas. His son Murugan was friendly to the Serpents, because he had as his pet the fowl. His fowl (Muruga or the Murg, Moraga, Murgi), the Peacock, was under his command. He did not harm the serpents. But Visnu's bird (Garuda) was a Naga-Destroyer. Murugan was known as Seyon in old Tamil. 'Seyon' means Red. The ancient tribal Tamil hymns call him 'wielder of spear' (Salapani, a name for Siva). Spear in Tamil is 'Vel'; and Murugan is known as 'Velan'. Velayudha, Kārtika, has Vela (Spear) as Ayudha (Weapon). The rites included dances in favour of a bachelor-god who liked virgins. In these dances drunkenness was tolerated. In Kaveripattam, a town at the south of the river Kävery, indeed all over the deep South and Ceylon, Murugan is still a popular god. Women dance to music in a A dance-loving, orgiastic festive atmosphere year by year in his name. bachelor-god, adored by, and adoring the virgins had been popular in ancient oriental religions. The importance of the Pleiades and the Mother is unalienable from oriental religions of the forgotten cultures. Culture appears really to be a two-way commerce.

The Sangam Age pictures Him as the victorious 'Real-god' who bears the gem-like peacock-flag, and rides a peacock or an elephant. He is the commander of the host of heaven. The Thiru-Muruga-r-rupadai praises him as a child of the daughter of Himavat, borne down to the earth by Agni, and nursed by the six Krttikä Devis in the grassy pool of the Himalayas.37

We need no longer delay the identification of the Pauränic-Skanda legend with the Tamil and Näga-tribal Murugan-cult. Neither need we delay to admit that Saivism is the reservoir into which the non-Aryan cults, such as bird-cult, fire-cult, fertility-cult of the Great Mother and the astrological priestism mingled freely.

We might recall in this connection the cult of Pallas Athena, patron goddess of Troy, whose name and epithet means 'Yoni' or the 'Vulva''. The Greek goddess Eileithya (Ilithiya or Lucina in Rome), like Krttikä has been a goddess of child-birth. She was the daughter of Zena (Seed or Bija) and Hera (womb or Toni); Eileithya's favourite tree was the cedar (Devadaru) because of the red-resin oozing from it, and consi- dered inflammable. Theophrastus calls this resin as menses of Eileithya,83 Sasthi-Devi (the Six-fold lady) of Eastern India is a patron goddess of the new-borns. The son of Rsi Mrkanda, who had been a member of the Angira-clan, and who as Märkandeya was a great Saiva Tantric has been closely associated with this Sasthi Devi. Märkandeya was a bachelor. His association with Sasthi was symbolic in the sense that Sasthi was invoked as the spirit of good nursing to babies, and Märkṇḍeya as the great winner of immortality. She too had her sacred tree, the banyan.

Out of Eileithya's tree, cedar fire was churned. We might recall the birth the Afvins from Saranyu, or of Fire from Arani, made of this wood or the common cedar. Both these trees are often mentioned in connection with Śiva's favourite. Sumerian for Cedar is Erin (or Arani), which also is a Greek word for 'torch'. The word Helen, a mystic name for Greek esoteric Tantra practised in Egypt, originates from the word Erin in the Sumerian language. Her brothers were Castor and Pollux (the Afvins). Students of comparative religion would find in these mythical names much food for thought.

The legend of Skanda-Kyttika-Murugan, and the cults of Fowl-Fire- Fertility, popular amongst the coastal and mountain tribes, became later the source of the hymnal adoration

of Siva-Uma or Siva-Parvati. This strong cult had to be recognised by the Puranic Brahmanism through the sublimating touch of Saivism. This cult and the Mäheśvara form of Saivism are inseparable, as we shall see through the following legends.

In describing the cult Dr. K. R. Venkataraman says, "Kurava girls on the hill-side planted a cock-banner smeared with ghee and mustard, and offered to the God garlands of red Oleander and green leaves; burnt incense; made oblations of balls of cooked rice mixed with goat's blood, and danced to the tune of sweet melodies."40 Be it remembered that Oleander is the source of a fatal drug, like Arsenic or Dhatură.

This, however, is purely tribal. The Brahmanic Skanda is part of Saivism, and follows a more orthodox pattern. The six faces of the God (1) removes darkness, and ushers enlightenment; (2) grants boons; (3) protects Yajña; (4) grants Self-knowledge; (5) destroys evil forces; and (6) loves His spouse Valli, who is a hill-bride, a tribal beauty. Valli and Murugan provide a remarkably romantic legend.

The evolution of the Skanda-cult into the Siva-Subrahmanyam form of worship is the result of a sustained cultural continuity; which involves the acceptance of Aryanism by the non-Aryan (or vice versa) races of India generally, and of the Deccan, in particular. India was predomi- nantly inhabited by the non-Aryans.1 The Aryan migrations took a long time to get established. The gradual acceptance of Vedism by the non- Vedic inhabitants supplies the bulk of the Purana legends. Skanda-Legend is just one of these strains.

The Cola Siva-temples had Subrahmanya temples attached to them. These temples (871-907 A.D.) always have sub-temples of deities attached to Saivism. The Subrahmanya images bear a rosary (Siva) and a short heart-shaped symbol with flying flames (Sakti symbol of Mother-Power, described by Allegro in his book 'Sacred Mushroom' as a phallic symbol), indicating thereby a stage in the gradual sublimation of a phallic tribalism into a Samkhyan Saivism.

By about the sixth century the Skanda cult shed all its phallic append- ages and trappings, and grew into the sublime Saiva Agama. The tribal Veddas and Kuravas (Kirātas and Savaras of the Puranas) were left to their own phallic ways; but the Aryanised Tamil-land, and with that the whole of Hinduism, pulsated with the Saiva-metaphysics, and the Siva-religious forms.

The cultish character of Skanda-ism shed its indigenous tribal tone by about 6th century. We see that the Agamas include the Vedas and the Kuravas as established sections of the main Hindu family. This is a case in point, and indicates how Saivism was able to do what Vedism had failed to do, namely, incorporating and synthesising the non-Vedic into the family of Hinduism. Šiva and Siva-metaphysics, namely, the rationality of the Kapila-system, played a valuable part in this change. The peninsular India and the Gangetic and Indus basins, together with the aboriginal hill tribes became inspired with one idea, the idea of Siva. What we know as Hindu-India is principally, thus, an achievement of Saivism. The primordial Tantra system, symbolised as Šiva and Sakti, together with the Vedic culture shaped into a total social Dharma, now celebrated as Hinduism or the Sanatana Dharma.

Kumāra Tantra deals with the Skanda cult. This is a part of the Agar is. Skanda is described in this Tantra as a Mahayogin with all the attributes of Siva. Besides being a Teacher and a Healer, he is the example of the great Puruşa, who, while associated close, body to body, with His alter-ego, Prakṛti, in the forms of Siva and Uma, is still a great ascetic. He is Subrahmanya, Lord of Valli and Devasena, and following Siva's example, is a co-partner with His wife in His Tantric Yogas, which involved mystic adoration of the Yoni (Source) without erotic carnalism.

We notice here in historical perspective how the erotic religions of Western-Asia and the Mediterranean (where they adored a youthful bachelor), had degenerated into erotic orgies. Having reached India, and her Vedic society, the same cults transformed themselves into a sublimated spiritual form which included even tribal traits. Agastya, Kapila, Patanjali, even Vyasa were dark-skinned Ṛsis considered to have be- longed to a gene very similar to what the Southern Tamils had sprung from. Most of Śiva-legends, as in Sivaratri Katha, relate to tribal devotions.

In Svämîmalai, Skanda is worshipped as Sväminätha, a special form of the Lord, in which he expounded the mysticism of the single letter seed- word Om, the Pranava. In the island

of Jävä we find a form known as Bhattaraguru or Sivaguru. This ancient, bearded, venerable form closely resembles the Svämināthа form in Svämimalai. Scholars identify this form with Agastya. But the question is moot, and deserves further research. In any case the tradition that associates Kapila, Patanjali, Agastya, Bhrgu, Angira with the Siva-Subrahmanya trait appears to be worthy of research.

The Northern images of the Siva concepts referrable to the Southern Chola and Pallava periods represented the concepts of Sat, Cit and Anandam, what in the North was Siva (Sat), Parvati (Cit) and Skanda (Anandam). The Mantra of Skanda too is a combination of the seed-sounds of Siva- Sakti and Kumāra. Kumarf is one of the recognised forms of Sakti as re- ferred in the Märkandeya Purāṇa. In the six-faced iconographical image of Skanda (Sanmukham) five of the faces are those of Siva, represent- ing the five physical elements (earth, water, fire, air and ether), and a sixth one represents Sakti. In designing the god's hands this symphony of Siva and Sakti has been maintained. Eleven of his hands represent the eleven Rudras; and the twelfth one represents Sakti.

The esoteric appeal of the 'Skanda-tattva' is consistent with this syn- thetical approach. According to this syncretic synthesisation it appears to be reasonable to conclude that in Skanda merges the tribal with the Vedic; the Sumer-Phoenician with the Indian; Siva with

Sakti; Śiva with Agni, or the Rg Veda with the Atharvan. This characteristic union of idealistic mysticism of spirit and form, reason and faith, realism and mysticism builds up the family of Hinduism without having to trans-gress the fundamental beliefs of the different cultural traits of the different peoples who had been thrown by historical forces and geographical conti- guity into one single lot.

A tenth century Tamil work Kanda-Puranam is but a restatement of the venerated Samkara-Samhita of the Skanda Purana. Most of the Puranas, and the epics, maintain the Skanda traditions, slightly differing in details. Skanda-hymns of Anna Giri and Kumāra Guru Pară are adored through- out the Tamil-land. And the processional festivals

arranged for the Muruges Şanmukham Subrahmanyam draw mammoth crowds of caste and non-caste Hindus inclusive of a variety of tribes.

The legendary Asura Taraka had pushed aside the Devas. The incident only refers to the temporary assertion of the Taraka or Esther culture over the Vedic. Such forcible assertions are but short-lived. A return was necessary; and this could be effected only through a synthesis of the warring cultures. The prominent tribal and Asura forms included the Fire-cult, the Bird-cult, the Kumara (Bachelor) cult (Recall the prominent Atys-Astarte pageantry of paganism); the cult of astrological rites and the bull and the phallic cults. Uma, a new name in Sanskrt language, and to the Purāṇas, has been identified as a
Sumerian-Phoenician goddess by Dr. S. K. Chatterji. The Tibetan Sakti Tantra believed in complementary Sakti aids like Jaya When the Mountain-Maid-cult began to get merged into and Vijaya. Saivism, pure Saivism was violated through the Former's emphasis on orgiastic erotica. Pure Saivism would not have any part in it. The Mountain-Maid-cult faced embarrassment. Then came the Uma-cult, which continued its existence through Tantric Vajra-Yogini form of Yogas current amongst the Mongolians and Tibetans, generally known as the Gandharvas, Yaksas and Kinnaras. This would probably account for Siva's double-marriage with the same Sakti in two forms; earlier, with Sati, a doyen of the Dakṣas, and later with the Mountain-Maid (Parvati), daughter of the Himalayas.

Names such as Menä, Maināka, Jaya and Vijaya appear in connection with the later marriage. Most of the Siva-legends refer to this marriage. Uma left the Jaya-Vijaya-way of Yoga, and adopted the Atharvan form of hill-worship. The cult of Uma and the cult of the Mountain-Maid, now purified, and shorn of erotic propensities (as indicated by the burning of Kama by Siva), cleared itself in full glory, to be accepted as the acknowledged Saivic way. Saivism was wedded to the Power-cult of Sakti. Agama and Nigama formed one haloed text.

Then the 'Seed' of Siva, Om, or Pranava, sprang up in the lands where a cult of 'Bachelor-sacrifice' was popular amongst the mass. This particular cult, which included Astarte-cult, Castor-Pollux cult, the mysticism of the White goddess, and of the White Horse (Svetasvatara?),

the tree cult of cedar, fire and oak (Pañcavati), now took root, and included the cult of the constellation of the Six-Stars, the Pleiades, which involved a great deal of the pagan fertility traditions of the Orient.

Thus evolves the great cult of Skanda. It become a part of Siva-Sakti- Agni-cult cleansed of excesses of drink, blood and sex. The Asura Taraka was removed for ever, and the way of the Devas was established as Hinduism.

The symbolic message of the birth of Kartikeya, and the Battle of Taraka should, in the light of the above, be obvious. The esoteric part of a religion, although spiritually much more abiding, cannot suppress, nor deny its historical progress which has been recorded in the Puranas legends.
Now we go to still another version of the 'Skanda' myths.

III-C

Kesi and Devasenä

King Yudhisthira had asked sage Märkandeya about the various forms of Fire-adoration. Märkandeya had been an authority of the Saivic and Tantric literature and culture. He had been highly regarded as one practically versed in the ways of both the Vedic and the Saivic forms, and their Tantric application. Märkandeya's opinions were accepted as incontrovertible authority on the changing forms of society and worship.

Märkandeya explained the various forms of the spread of Fire worship. From him we know how the cult of Fire (Agni) was associated with virgins and blood sacrifice, and how, as in Mahiṣmatî and Delphos, Agni valued nothing more than having virgins around him. This explains the Roman vestal Virgins, Christian Virgins dedicated to Christ, and

the Jews prohibition of females in Zionist temples.) Yudhisthira had naturally felt the curiosity of asking him of the rather complex form of the Skanda cult, or Kartikeya-rites which make so much ado about Fire, Virgin and Fowl sacrifice. We have discussed the rite before, and shown that in these rites various cultures had got synthesised, but mainly these rites were connected with some other rites current in the Aegean, Iran and Babylon in the cultural area covered by Atharvan-Angirasa. Mahabharata has to relate this legend.

In search of finding an able General for the final annihilation of the Asura-menace once Indra had gone to the Manasa-mountain. He met there an Asura about to rape a tender girl. The girl was crying aloud for help. Indra saved the girl from the Asura, whose name was Keśi. Once freed, she gave herself as the daughter of Prajapati. Her name was Devasena (The Deva Army). Her sister Daityasend (Asura Army) had already been chased away by the Dänavas. She said that with the permission of their father they used to move about the Manasa mountain, adorned with Lakes and Gardens. "Here," she said, "Keśi met us, and began to molest us since, trying to force our favours. He would come everyday, and woo us. I did not like it. My ambition is to get married to someone who could save the Devas from this type of humiliation from the hands of the Asuras. My sister has succumbed to the temptations of the Asuras. But I still think that a woman is nothing if she does not give birth to such sons who could stake life for safeguarding virtue, and overcoming the evil forces of the tyrants."

Indra accepted her as his cousin, as she happened to be the daughter of his aunt. Indra was the son of Dakṣa, and Devasena was the daughter of Kasyapa.

"But for getting such progenies," remarked Indra, "a girl must find out a worthy husband."

"That is why I prepare, and wait," answered Devasena, "my sister failed me. She fell to the showy might of the Dänavas. Might is not Power. Pride is not character." She described the kind of husband she had in mind; but Indra did not know of any one who could answer to that description. He further noted that the time of the day appeared as in- auspicious, and a great crisis was about to threaten the lives of the Asuras and the Devas. Indra was a

past master in reading the times. He did not think the moment good enough to go out for a find. He proposed that He could see that an epoch-making she should wait, prepare and pray. crisis was almost at the doors, and he would hardly find time to fulfil the wishes of Devasenä in a hurry. So, he took the girl to Brahma, and asked for the favour of the great Brahma in finding her a qualified husband. He looked at the extra-ordinary girl, smiled, and assured Indra. He said that her proper husband has to be someone equally gifted as her own powerful state, and such a person must possess the combined powers of Soma, Siva and Agni. (Moon-cult; Bull-cult and Fire-cult).

This person was Skanda-Kartikeya, who, as we know was born of the combined efforts of Sakti-Siva and Agni.

We shall hear of this birth of Skanda in yet another version. There too the three forces meet.

In interpreting the Skanda-myths the author does not presume to speak with any voice of finality. No interpretation could claim authenticity. Neither is any ingenuity claimed. The different Skanda-legends, when collected, coalesced, compared and studied together,

do

appear to give a direction to similar legends and gods found traceable in the Oriental and Western myths and religious observances. In the light of the historical fact of an unbroken East-West cultural commerce these similarities do project a surmise. Yet all is not conjecture. The gods are there; the rites are there; the descriptions, weapons,

costumes,

pet-rides, social-forms surrounding these religious forms force upon the mind a new legend: what we call Saivism in India had to bear a great impact from alien forms; but with supreme indifference to the alien excesses of sunny sensu- ousness of orgy, wine, women, blood, Saivism absorbed the vitriol and maintained the inner spiritual content. It was never, and could never be a question of 'borrowing'. In cultural commerce there is never a borrowing. Imitation and adoption is homage paid to the deserving by appreciation. In such eventual mix-ups the ethically sounder of the two remains dominant. In this case Saivism has remained so.

UL-D

Agni-Svaha-Skanda

In a hermitage of Vasistha a great Yajña was in progress. There Indra took Devasenä, (q.v.) and sheltered her. When the sages were offering their final Soma Havi to the god Agni, and when Agni appeared to accept the offering his eyes fell on the wives of the Seven sages. The uninhibited beauty of the wives of the sages made Agni wish them. But Agni himself was wished by one of Daksa's daughters, Svähä.

From this incident a far-reaching result made history, and Devasena's fate would be involved and decided. Agni knew that his restlessness was neither worthy of him, nor safe for him. He was ashamed of himself. He tried to control. But try as he might, he could not resist the touch of those beautiful ladies, and their shapely limbs; so he ordained a special form of his for the use of women alone in the form of Ahvantya-Agni (the daily homestead-fire in which the food for the gods were prepared). Thus arose the system of Fire-priestesses and Virgin offerings. How faithfully has 'fire' remained constant to its own taste for shapely female forms! But he knew that what he had been doing was not an example for gods to set. It was only a ruse to keep near the priestesses. He got depressed, and left for forests, and decided to give up his life." A double life is not the best answer for peace and happiness. (Agni appears to have a rather senti- mental personality when compared to the great Hellenic god Zeus for whom a nice girl was a nice girl. He knew best how to deal with such a case. One is East; the other West. Typical attitudes.)

Daksa's daughter Svähä, who always wanted Agni as her husband, took advantage of this opportunity. She appreciated Agni's struggles with himself. She, who loved Agni, also took the aid of a ruse, and disguised herself as the wives of the sages. She came to him in six of the forms of the six wives of the six sages; but she dared not assume the form of Arundhati, the wife of Vasistha, because she knew her powers only too well. None could disguise her spiritual glow.

Svähä came in the guise of Angira's wife, Sivä. But after their union she said, 'I do not want to be noticed by others; so I am taking the shape of a hawk, and none would notice me flying out of this forest.' Disguised as a hawk, she flew out. It is only then that Svähä

realised that Agni's seed was too hot for her womb. She had either to perish or to cast away the seed. She washed herself in a secreted spot on the Sveta mountain. A wood of reeds had covered an immense area; and the semen (seed) got lost into the bed of reeds. Even though incapable of retention, Svähä, out of her lasciviousness could not withhold herself from falling into Agni's embrace, and went six times to Agni in the disguise of the six wives of the six sages; and six times she cast the semen in the same bed of reeds. (The Bija-Mantra of the Virgin worshippers, the Vama Tantras, was too violent for the Vedic Svähä-form of worship. The two got synthesised amongst people who lived in mountains and reed-laden swamp areas.)

In course of time a full grown baby was born with six heads, and twelve hands. (A full grown religious rite retaining six different forms of rites grew into a powerful cult).
He cried aloud (like Rudra, who too cried) and was known as Skanda, the Crier (Rudra too was called the Crier). He was born with the Power in him, and this Power made him the most feared of the beings. He wielded the Power known as Sakti. It was the combined might of the powers of the Six Vedic priestesses, and of Sudha herself, of Agni of the Vedas, Agni of the Virgins, and of Soma. It had the power of both Virgin and Fowl cults (of Aphrodite and Horus cults). This young one at birth was wedded to Devasena. (Sakti, the weapon, is symbolic of Yoni).

He could easily lift the bow of Samkara Siva; he held the two celestial elephants in both of his hands like two toys; then at his calls came a fierce looking cock which he held tightly. He began to play with all of them (Bow-Siva; Elephants-Indra; Sakti-Mother; Cock-Agni, and a symbol of the Iranian or Assyrian Horus.) He began to blow at his conch cheerily and the gods came to see this wonder. The mountain known as, Kraunca (a curlew, a heron) was pierced by him. (Once Parasurama had also done this.) The bursting of the Krauñca seems to have an esoteric significance as Parasurama and Skanda both are specifically mentioned as to have achieved the feat. Anyway the feat was Tantric, and had much to do with what later developed as the Uma-Maheśvara cult.

We know the later part of the legend from our previous narration. This Mahabharata narration gives us the special information about (1) the decay of the Vedic Agni; (2) the hiding of the Vedic Agni, and its reappearance in a changed form; (3) the substitution of the Soma sacrifice with other forms of fire worship; (4) the new form of worship as had been patronised by Angira-Atharvan, and the other sages, from the clan of Atri, the Father of Soma; (5) the crossing of the seas by the new forms of the fire cult; (6) the spread of the cult amongst the Fish people (see Minäksi legend narrated later). In Skanda we find synthesised the cults of Soma, Agni, Sakti, and finally Siva, thereby signifying that there had been, at least, one form of Saivism which had a foreign antecedent and which had to be moulded to fit in with the indigenous Siva worship of the Hindus.

III-E

Skanda

Yet another version of the Kartikeya-legend is recorded in the Maha- bharata (Anusasana-186). Those interested might refer to this version, which involves these aspects conclusively, including in the cult of the peoples known also as the Gandharvas, who were given to worshipping the Horse-headed god, and who associated the uses of wine, flesh and blood-sacrifices with worship.

IV-A

The Churning of the Ocean

The followers of the Rg Veda and the "Trayi' (the three Vedas- Sama, Rg and Yajur) are supposed to have been the followers of Brhaspati, the Guru of the Devas. As Angirä-Atharvan began to influence a section with his impressive view of Power-material prosperity, which included medical, metallurgical, chemical and astrological knowledge, as well as the knowledge of mechanical aids and craftsmanship (inclusive of town planning, architecture and fortifications), the Aryan society split.45 This latter formed the larger section, and continued to call them- selves Asuras. The former were the Devas.

The two most important secrets that the Devas enjoyed were those of Soma and Ampta. Although through usage these two could be regarded as drinks, yet the two were mystic secrets leading to the Immortal Truth. The Asura would like to know those; but they, as Angirasa-materialists could not enjoy the best of the two lives.

Kṛṣṇa Vasudeva belonged to the Lunar Angiras group, yet he was the one who fought against the Asura-way all his life. He was regarded as the very incarnation of Visnu and Veda, for this reason. He appre- ciated the dangers of a misconceived adherence to the powers of materialis- tic prosperity. But he was also aware of the danger of dependence on mere spiritual other-worldliness. His vigorous positive principles inspire Hinduism. As the Master-mind standing at the junction of our times, Krsna has been hailed as a saviour of Dharma. Without Krsna there would be no Hinduism.

In the Gîtâ he clearly says, "The knowledge of the three Vedas, the drinkers of the Soma, might recover from worldly failings and pray for heaven; they might even reach, through their rites, the regions they seek; but the effect of such rites being spent out, they must come back to the state they had started from; and in this way (by following the Tray-Dharma), they effectually maintain the cycles of birth and death.46

The Suras kept themselves separated from the Asuras, and considered themselves to belong to a higher class. They rejected the Asuras as inferiors. But the Asuras grow in power age by age; and under the chastening influence of Rama of Ayodhya and Krsna of Mathura, they were finally and actually settled down. The ideas that crystallised the best of the two ways, and symbolised a unified peace, took forms as Siva, Ganesa and Skanda, along with the family of Siva, inclusive of His consort Parvati, Uma, Durga, etc.

The legend of the Churning of the Ocean involves the insistence of the Asuras to know the secret of the Amṛta (the drink of immortality).

In finding this out both the Suras and Asuras made efforts.

They were not always different, always inimical. In fact, the Suras and Asuras were the same people, and were originally known as Asuras, by virtue of their having the same father, Kasyapa.

They split on the subject of ideology. Gita refers to this difference, which crisply could be classified as 'this worldliness' and the 'other worldli- ness'. Angira-Atharvan-Bhrgu-Sukra made a group, and patronised the Asuras. Indra-Brhaspati made the other group.

Saivism,
which included the forces of Agni and Varuna, because of its base in the Ganas, i.e. the tribes, symbolised the Asura-rituals; whereas the Suras continued to follow the Visṇu-way.

In almost all cases of conflict between the Vedas and the Agamas, ultimately Siva and Visṇu are found to make a compromise. Hinduism as a way of life is basically sustained by this spirit of give and take. Even geographically the Ganges and the Gangetic valley as the

land of the Visṇu
followers of Vedism stood in the contradistinction with the Narbada-valley, where the Angirasa people and the followers of Saivisin flourished. Generally speaking the Krsna supported the Agama culture; the Kavery, the Vaisnava culture; the Narbada reared Saivism, the Ganges Vaisnavism. In the South Kanchi remains to this day, as does Vārāṇasi and Haridvara in the North a meeting place of both the trends. In Bhakti the two lost their fierce distinction.

The Churning of the Ocean describes this struggle. Of the many recensions and versions of this significant legend we follow here the version from the Padma Purana.

This Churning was forced upon by the results of a feud between Durväsä, son of Atri, brother of Soma, and Indra.

Durväsä had received a garland from a 'Vidya-dhart" who honoured the sage with her garland. Soon Durväsä went about with the garland in great joy. He had fallen in love with

the Vidyadhari, and like one out of his mind he went about bragging about his new love for the Vidyadhari.

While in this condition, he met Indra, the king of the Gods, riding his Airavata. He threw the garland on Indra; but Indra at once placed it on the head of his favourite elephant who pulled the garland down, and threw it on dust. Enraged at this insult Durväsă cursed Indra.

Since the pride of power and wealth made
Indra insult Durväsä's garland, soon he would be de- prived of Sri (Spirit of prosperity).
The curse deprived the Devas of their high spiritual position.

As usual, Indra approached the neutral grand-father Brahma for a redress. Brahma approached Visṇu, leading all the Devas in a dele- gation. Viṣṇu proposed that he would arrange for a 'Churning of the Ocean' after throwing in the Ocean all kinds of select and secret vegetal antidotes, and recover the lost Sri.

In churning, the mountain Mandara would become the churning- pole: "Tortoise' the great would provide the pivotal rest for the pole to swing about; and Vasuki, the serpent, would become the churning- string. (Mounts, Serpents, Ride-Animals, Lotuses, Forts, etc. are 'technical' words of esoteric significance in the Yogic vocabulary).
But this churning, said Viṣṇu, would have to be done by the Suras and Asuras together. The Asuras have to be approached, and made to agree against promised shares of the spoils of the exercise. In case Visnu succeeded in confusing the Asuras, he would see that the Asuras are made to lose their shares out of their own inherent folly and weakness. The deserving would then keep the share.

The Asuras and Suras (Devas) agreed to churn the ocean for salvaging wealth of various kinds. They took help from the Mountain, Mainăka, a tortoise, Kurma or Kacchapa, and a serpent, Väsukt. The effort was co-operative, and results, obviously would be shared. That was the silent understanding.

Kurma stood still at the ocean bottom. His hard shell provided a strong pivot for the mountain Maināka, which served as the churning pole; and Ananta, the serpent was coiled around Maināka's body as a rope which the Asuras and the Devas pulled. The Asuras held
to the hood-end of the serpent, and suffered more from poisonous breaths. The Devas
were at the tail end and enjoyed a less harassing role.

The churning soon began to produce results. The Tree of Plenty' came first. Then came the 600,000,000 Apsaras who were immediately shared equally. Then came the Moon (Aphrodite? Moon Goddess?). Siva monopolised this one. This was followed by a spurt of terrible poison. This poison, produced of conflict (Kala-Kita), was destroying creations. All stood in danger of annihilation, when Siva, the Graceful God of Neutral Passivity, drank the poison. It left just a burning mark of blue on his throat. He was called by the honorific "The Blue-throated One' (Nil-Kantha).

Looking at Siva drinking Kala-Kata, the Asuras, particularly the Nägas, thought the drink to be a good one. A few drops of drinking taught them a lesson. The Nagas remained poisonous all their lives. Then from the Ocean's mysterious depths appeared the divine physician, invetnor of medical drugs, Dhanvantari, a young sage with the vessel of the Immortal Drink (Ampta) in his hand. For this drink all, Devas and Asuras, became restless. Next appeared the Divine Horse, Uccaifrava. Indra took that one. An elephant, Airavata, too fell to his share by virtue of his royal position. Next emerged Sri. The great Lady (White- Goddess, Rhea, Rhi of Rg Veda; He.a, wife of Zeus, also known as Dione, daughter of Oceanus, mother of Aphrodite). She chose Visnu as her consort. This disturbed the Asuras. Why did the Devas pounce upon the spoils without any share for them? They smelt fowl-play, and attacked to have the Amṛta contained in the bowl of Dhanvantari. Viṣṇu brought order to the pandemonium, and proposed a great feast where the Im- mortal Drink would be distributed. Meanwhile he remained its custodian.

When the time for sharing came, the Devas made use of the weakness of the Asuras for woman, dance and music. They made Visnu assume the role of a dancing girl, and the Asuras, as well as Siva himself, were tricked of the prizes.

(A corollary legend describes how one of the Asuras slipped through the strong guards of the Devas, and was in the process of drinking when he was beheaded by Viṣṇu, at the instance of the gods Sun and Moon. Because of his having drunk a portion, though severed, the head and the body continued to live as Rahu and Ketu, and forever watched for opportunity (as Rahu and Ketu) for harassing the Sun and the Moon. This causes the swallowing of the Sun and the Moon during the eclipses.

The 'Churning of the Ocean' is one of the earlier legends of the Puranas, and symbolically explains how the Vedic Indra-religion came to be known as the great Hinduism, where Agama, Tantra and Veda became one great culture. This phenomenal process of a cultural meta- morphosis enjoys the pride of place in the Hindu chronicles and the Epics, all referred to the authorship of Vyasa, who refers it to Bhrgu. We know how Marici, Bhrgu, Angira, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu, Atri, Vasistha differed from Sanaka, Sanandana, Sanatana and Sanatkumāra in the fact that the last four retired on their unproductive spiritualism which failed to leave a traditional link to posterity. Actual tradition and progress depended on the first group of sages, who led a married life, and increased the
tribes.

This Ocean is the Ocean of spiritual traditions. Atri-tradition as reflected through the Astral, Astrological and Astronomical followers of the Moon-people, and the Siva and the Agama traditions as reflected through the Durväsä people were in conflict with the Indra traditions.

Tantricism believed in Vidya and Avidya, i.e., knowledge of esoteric power. The symbolic garland of this knowledge was ignored by Indra who sneered at it by throwing it to the appreciation of an animal.

(In the legend of Ganga, who symbolised the synthesised culture of the Asuras and Suras, or the Siva and the Viṣnu-people, we shall meet the Indra-animal Airavata again attempting to insult Ganga's power.) This led to a spiritual fall of the Devas.

The Vedic Devas had to retire and take inner counsel. They had to regain their power. This could be attained only by a co-operative effort. There was enough substance in the Atharva-Angirasa way. This spiritual process has been symbolised by such names as Mainãka, Kurma and Vasuki. (Mainaka-Mena's son. Mena's daughter was Siva's wife. Varuna, a friend of Agni was his friend. Indra was his enemy. His credentials prove him to be of great value to the Saivas. Kurma= Kacchapa, meaning a tortoise. But Kacchapa is philologically a recension of Kasyapa, a symbol of Aryan patriarchy. Vasuki is also known along with Seṣa, and Ananta, as a Serpent with a thousand heads. He is the King of the Nagas; he wears a Red dress and a White garland of pearls. He wields a plough and a pestle. His similarities with Siva and Balarama (Krsna's brother) are obvious.) 46A In view of the inner significance of the names involved we see that Kasyapa's children were trying to 'churn' a solution through the efforts of the Agama Saivism. In the Tantra system these names, Mountain, Serpent and Tortoise evoke technical symbolisms of a mystic nature. Thus these symbols are freely used in, what is known as, Tantras, of which we shall speak later.

The objects which were to have emerged refer to Tantra and Saivism. The 'Tree of Plenty' (Kalpa-Taru) like Nandini, or Surabhi (the Cow of Plenty) means the Earth as a consort of Kasyapa. This Cow or Tree of Plenty is, of course, the Earth, and the Yogic Power of the ability to exploit the resources of the Earth. Moon, of course, the Lord of Stars (astrology) was Siva's share. (In the Oriental and Greek Myths the Moon is the White Lady Endymion.) The fluid of destruction too was Siva's share. He being the Equaliser and Disintegrator. Viṣṇu, the spiritual Deva power, created the mystic delusion, Maya, which invoked the con- fusion. It could lead the best intentioned to be misled to self-destruction in case a literal adherence to the Female in erotic self-urge carries devotees away to perversions. The world and its realities are covered with Maya, which emanates from the

same Prakṛti who, as Power, Maha- Vidya, leads to the knowledge of Immortality. Man may and ought to exploit the material resources; but must take utmost care not to be fasci- nated by its inherent temptations.

The Churning of the Ocean stands out as a great legend in the tradi- tion of the Siva-Viṣnu, Agama-Veda, Asura-Sura synthesis of which the Hindu-way of life is a standing achievement. Angiras-Atharvan-Agni way had to mix with the Rg Vedic way. We are gathering more and more facts about the Two ways, the Right and the Left ways.

Hindu Saivism is an achievement in synthesis. It had to secure and protect the Vedic association of Hindu Saivism as distinct from the alien influences of eroticism and excesses. Thus we have very little to explain in this legend. The Asuras discovered that although their own society through their efforts had developed a good deal, they were yet to reach the peak of the spiritual truth.

Kacchapa, or the Kasyapa people were involved in the mystic way of Tantra, which was popular amongst the Nagas (serpent) and the Giri-s, or Sikhara-s (Mountain). In the Tibetan Tantra system these symbols, namely, serpent, peak and tortoise, are still used to indicate esoteric specialities. A form of Tantric Yogas had developed, as we have observed, amongst a people, strictly outside the Vedic race of the Aryans. The Endless Serpent-Power (Ananta, Sesa, Vasuki) was used for attaining the truth about Immortality.

Later, Visnu, who became friendly to Śiva, as a balancing and sustaining power (preserving and sustaining from a continuous state of tension between opposite opinions)

is figured as one who 'overcomes' the Nagas or the serpent-people. In fact this signifies incorporation of non-Aryan people to the Hindu fold. He uses Seṣa as a bed; 'dances' on the heads of Kaliya, a Naga; Ananta is his trustee; Vasuki is honoured with Siva as a follower of the Siva-way.

The knowledge of Immortality being spiritually contradictory to the cultivation of a materialistic society, the Asuras found it hard to acquire it without special efforts. They wanted to share and honour this, if only to lie at peace with the Suras. Rahu, the son of an

Angirasa girl, Simhika, still attempted to sneak into the secret. But like all the Asuras, he too was a Siva-follower. Ketu was called Raudra (son or follower of the Angirasa-Ghora way); he was also called Krúra (cruel). It was the way of Visnu to expose those who meant to have the best of both ways without committing much. So these of divided loyalties were sheared, as Rahu and Ketu were. They remained the 'bad Stars' of the celestial order. The conflicting opinions came to a new order; but still the knowledge of immortality remained a special secret meant only for the ones who seek, and dedicate with a totally spiritual impersonality.

The new order admitted into it dance and music. The knowledge of the Real remained a secret, until in Saivism the two got mixed. Siva became a friend to Visṇu.

Hinduism and the Sanatana Varnäsrama system of life became esta- blished. It is about this life, and this Hindu faith that the epics and the Purānas sing.

In Tantra, Jaina and Mahayana Buddhism the list of the forms that emerged from the Cosmic Ocean of Mystic fluid (the Tree of Plenty, the Aphroditic feminine cult, the Moon Goddess, the Cosmic vitriol, the drink of Immortality, the White Horse, the White Elephant, and ulti- mately the White Lady of the Venus-Astarte-Esther-tradition, which was a congealment of Beauty, Symmetry, and Love) conveys other messages, and the legend is honoured and treasured as a great revealer of mystic instructions. Its acceptance into the Hindu literature, and the prominence given to it speaks, once again, of the Hindu catholicity of which Saivism is a living form.

IV-B

The Descent of the Ganges

A mythological study of the evolution of the holiness of the river Ganges as the most sacred of the rivers in India establishes the reason why the Hindus entertain a supreme regard for this water-way.

The Puranas narrate that once thrilled by the music conducted by the sage Närada, Lord Visṇu had perspired. The divine perspiration cogealed into a drop, gradually slipped down his toe, when Brahma, watching it, held it within his water vessel.

No vessel could contain the sacred fluid, which overflowed, covered the universe. The stream flowing towards the heaven was known as the Mandakini, which, till now, as the nebulous Milky-Way spins into the Space stars, planets and other worlds. The second stream flowed through the nether-world, and was known as the Bhogavati. It appears that these narrators were not completely unaware of the subterranean water- streams.

The
stream that flowed through the world has been celebrated as the Ganges. The Hindus adore this stream, as on the banks of this river had taken place the most dramatic racial and cultural integration. But we have to study the history of this third flow. The Puranas contain this legend in a hundred versions, and each one, in drama, appears to be

more
exciting than the other one.

The legend is associated with the inevitable Indra, the King of the heavenly Empire, and constantly standing in fear of losing his privileged position to men, who by their holy conduct and persistent penance and sacrifices were democratically permitted to

dispossess
him.

One of these kings who by his conduct and penances had challenged Indra's monopoly was king Sagara, a scion of the solar line. He had decided to perform the Asvamedha Sacrifice no less than a hundred times. This Yajña could be performed by a King who had claimed tributes from all other kings, who would pay homage to the sacrificial Horse, which was supposed to have passed through their lands. Sub- mission to the King was symbolised by the homage paid to the sacrificial Horse, which moved at its will, protected by an army. In accordance with the injunctions of the scriptures, as well as the accepted rules of the time a horse with a banner was let loose to cover the country, state after state. A large army protected the horse. Any ruler who permitted the horse an easy passage automatically accepted the emperor's vassalage. Those who challenged the progress had to fight till vanquished.

No chieftain dared check the progress of King Sagara's sacrificial horse. And Sagara's plan for the sacrifice went on smoothly. Ninety- nine times he performed the same sacrifice in the same way. Could he perform it a hundredth time, he would be justified in claiming the leader- ship of Heaven from Indra. So he arranged for the hundredth horse- sacrifice. Naturally, Indra did not like this too much. Accordingly, he hatched a scheme to defeat Sagara's plan. He stole the horse, and secretly carried it to a lonely beach where the great sage Kapila was merged in meditation. There he left the horse hidden within his hermitage.

When the royal guards missed the horse, a great search was made, without any success. Then Sagara's sixty thousand sons were ordered by the King to make a thorough search in the name of the honour and prestige of a Father's vow. The sons discovered the horse at the hermitage of Kapila. But Kapila, unaware of the entire course of events, was as usual merged in meditation. The effulgence of youth was no respector of venerable saintliness, specially when the saint was discovered as one who had collaborated in a heinous crime. In any case the Solar Sagaras would have little regard for Kapila, a materialistic philosopher, and suspect to the spread of Aryanism. They wanted to question the sage, and disturbed his prayers. So disturbed, the sage found the Sagara- children ridiculing and insulting him as a 'fake' sage. They knew nothing of his real power. The atrocious impudence of a handful of power-drunk youth provoked Kapila's wrath. He looked fire at them, reducing the entire army of sixty thousand to a heap of ashes.

The sad news reached the King. No more did he think of the sacrifice and its glories. Now he wanted simply to arrange for sacramental funeral of the ashes, and perform the last rites of his sons. He approached the sage, who said that the crime of the indisciplined sons could be washed only by the sacred waters of the holy Ganges, if she could be made to descend from heaven to earth. We remember that she was locked up in the drinking vessel of Brahma himself. She was only too eager to be released, and descend on earth.

She was eager, but who to reach her, and convey to her the sad necessity of King Sagara? Although he had redeemed the horse, his attention was diverted from the completion of

Sacrifice to the recovery of the ashes of his sons. The mortification of the incompleteness of the last rites of his sons made him very sad. Not even the idea of a heavenly kingship could console him. His only son alive was Asamanja. But the upsets in the royal fortunes had turned him into a hard boiled cynic. He was parti- cularly cruel to the Ṛsis, who, he thought, under their assumed sanctity, were nothing but bundles of pretensions. He could not care less for the order of things, and enjoyed displays of sadistic tortures at the cost of all, particularly of the saintly. The people, tired of his cruel pranks com- plained against Asamanja, who was promptly deprived of his rights of inheritance in favour of his son, Amśuman. But the old King did not forget to impress on Amśuman the great duty of finding the means for the release of his uncles from eternal hell by pleasing Kapila, i.e., by bringing down the Ganges to the Earth.

Amsuman went to Kapila, and succeeded in receiving from him a heartening message. The final rites of his ancestors, of course, could be performed only if he succeeded the Ganges to flow where Kapila's hermitage stood. This was already known. But he further added, if not he, if not his son, someone of the line would be able to bring the Ganges down. But the first step was to contact the source of the Ganges, who was locked up in Brahma's vessel. So Amśumän tried to get to the heaven to release the Ganges. He failed. His son Dilipa tried; he failed. After Dilipa, his son, Bhagiratha prepared himself for the difficult task. He went for a special training and penance, and met Ganga, the Mother. She spoke to the charming boy, a picture of devotion. She said, "I am prepared to suffer myself to a descent for the good of men; but when I descend from heaven to earth, the impact of the fall might prove to be disastrous for creation. This possibility must be countered. There is a way however. If Siva himself agreed to take his due place on the earth, and receive me on his head, perhaps I could descend without causing harm to any."

So Bhagiratha, the great Aryan King of India, started worshipping Siva. Soon the great God of gods revealed his Grace, and agreed to bear the fall of the cosmic stream on his head. Meanwhile, Indra's favourite elephant Airavata, too proud of his prowess, said, "For a simple task as this why should Mahadeva Siva's favour be sought? I alone could easily

have borne the impact of a simple stream!" Hearing of Airavata's boast, Mother Ganges remarked, "No Bhagiratha, no such chances need be taken now. If Siva is agreed, he may kindly help. Thereafter we shall have occasion to try the strength of the mighty Airavata himself."

Śiva presented himself on the appointed morning. Bhagiratha was blowing his conch in glee. And Mother Ganges descended on Siva's matted locks which were hanging loose down his back in a tawny mass over his white shoulder,

But Lord Siva was quite fond of playing a trick or two when he could expose little weaknesses of feminine vanity. Lord Siva knew that by selecting him as the one to bear her impact on his ancient head Ganga, the lady, also had construed to enhance her own prestige. No other, but Siva Himself had to receive her on His head! What vanity! What presumptions! Water that had started from Vişnu's feet was to be on Siva's head! 'Females could be really cheeky,' thought Siva. He did not altogether mind it; because he had condescended to oblige poor Bhagiratha. He was not at all reluctant to pay regard to the chap, Visnu, who was indeed a great deity, and a hail-fellow-well-met. The water flowing from his feet, and passing through Brahma's keeping was good enough for his head. In various confrontations they had, after all, agreed to be good friends. He wanted to play a little fun, and teach the conceited and turbulent lady a lesson: 'After all, cheeky females deserved to be taught, so he argued..

As soon as Ganga descended on his head; the matted locks at once entwined the liquid-lady, and clapped her within a nasty knot; she got quite lost in the huge and tortuous piles of Siva's tawny locks. She roamed and roamed for an outlet; till she went out of breath and was choking miserably. Then alone she regretted her hidden pride. "Lord Siva is indeed, great," she thought. Then she began to pray, seeking Lord Siva's favour. Enough of the game.

Meanwhile, Bhagiratha, who had been expecting all the time the milky flow to jump out of the tawny locks, was acutely disappointed as he waited for Ganga to come out, and she

did not. He had no idea about the divine drama which, in the meanwhile, was being played. He thought he had again lost the grace of Ganga, and would fall like his ancestors. This made him very nervous, and he began to pray to Siva, begging him to release the

heavenly flow. Śiva parted his hair, and in three different streams the Ganges sprang out.

Then came Airavata's turn. He remembered how Ganga had slighted his strength. She would not rely, in her great conceit, on the inferior strength of Airavata. This had provoked him; and he insisted her to know the strength he really had. He tried to obstruct the passage of the turbulent angry stream, now raging down the mountainous slopes bound

for the plains and the ocean. He managed to stay put across the course of the divine stream. But as ill-luck would have it, the roaring stream carried Airavata away like a straw, and knocked sense out of the brute till he broke one of his tusks, and scrambled for life to the safety of Indra's shelter.

This was jolly fun. Ganga began to feel proud again; she had scored a victory over the powerful Airavata, and so over the superiority of Indra. Proud of her powers she merrily entered the hermitage of a great sage, Janhu, a great follower of the Yogic-system. She could well have diverted her course in order to bypass the holy hermitage. But she did not. Instead, she prepared to sweep away the hermit and the her- mitage before her

torrential

course. She expected the hermit to give her the right of way.

The result was a sad one. The sage absorbed the impudent stream like a sip from a cup. Now she rested in the Sage's bowels, not too con- genial a place for any conceited lady's residence. In fact the dismal prospects caused her not a little anxiety. Poor Bhagiratha, on the other hand, was not prepared to lose the benefits of his long penance in so ignominous an incident. He offered prayers to the ancient sage (Yoga), and related his adventure and purpose in life. The sage, paci- fied by the prayers of the charming youth, relaxed. He released Ganga by tearing open his limb (right side), thus giving her a new name Janhavi, which meant 'the daughter of Janhu'. By the virtue of his own rights, inasmuch as he had given her a new birth, Janhu, the sage, became the great Ganga's 'deliverer'.

By now Gangă had reached easier courses, having covered the Hima-layan regions. Next she came to the plains, and flowed down to the sea, thereby washing the ashes of Sagara's sons. Since, like one of the members of the family, the great sea, for all times, received and permitted the ashes of Sagara's sons a home within the shelter of its waves, within the peace of its eternal depths, out of gratitude, the great King Bhagiratha gave to the ocean his ancestral honorific and title; and called him Sagara, meaning 'one of the members of the family of the great King Sagara'. The Southern sea bore the name of an Aryan King. In this passage Ganga had to cover the 'sanction' of Kapila, the foot of Visnu, the vessel of Brahma, the head of Siva, the body of Airavata, the thigh of the Yogi, Janhu before she could claim homage from all as the great eman- cipator.

The legend has been related at some length, because it has a purpose to serve. In order

to
appreciate and understand fully the narrative of the Epics, or of the chronicles, known as the Puranas, one should learn to find out geographical, historical, but above all, cultural facts suggested through the narratives, which are contained in them.

Narratives in the great Epics and the Puranas serve three purposes. Herein lies the greatness of these narrators, whose insight of truth, and grasp over facts were equally authentic. They were experts in their knowledge of facts on the one hand, and in their skill at sublimating historical incidents into great allegorical narratives on the other. The craftsmanship of these legends give the narrators the highest place in the art of writing chronicles. The legends in the Epics are not altogether legendary. Such Epic legends serve the purpose of interpreting also the Vedas, so that the great truths might be practised in life. They please the mass-minds which crave for stories. They contain much of historical, geographical and cultural education.

For instance this narrative of the origin and career of the Ganges, the river, contains the history of the great evolution of Saivism in a civilisation predominantly Vedic, and predominantly proud of its superiority. It also contains the history of the progress of Aryan colonisation, and a record of the science of irrigation as practised by the ancient Aryans. Aryans have been skilful builders of canals and watercourses. They always

remembered how they had once been harassed by the sands of the extensions of the Gobi, and how their favourite rivers had dried up, and forced them to migrate. Almost the same tale was repeated after their migration to India. As they settled in the 'land of the seven rivers' (Sapta-Sindhu of Rg Veda), they realised how the Thar desert of India had swallowed up the two rivers which flowed from the North to the South across the land now known as the Rajasthan, and which met the sea at the Rann of Cutch. These too, gradually had dried up, and the sands had taken over, thus repeating the experience of their ancestors in Eastern Si Kiang and the Gobi. Harassed by these experiences they learnt the art of irrigation, which they developed to a miraculous technical perfection in Kashmir, where they controlled the mighty Indus and the Jhelum, making the lands of the five rivers a picture of fertility. Accord- ing to the Puranas the course of the Yamuna was also changed by human efforts. The above legend about the Ganges directs the same way.

Sagara, of course, was a powerful monarch. His sixty thousand sons were products from 'one fruit' which 'burst before its time'. (Both the facts are from the epic.) Obviously these were his subjects, who were not fully matured, or fully civilised. They attempted to follow 'the white- horse along its course'. The 'white-horse' represented the Aryan Vedism, which was being accepted by state after state, year by year, until these immature people, out of over-enthusiasm aroused by fanatic success, attempted to force on the people of the lower Ganges, their own way of Life. The way of Kapila's Samkhya and Patanjali's Yoga were not favoured by the Aryans who dubbed these ways as being anti-Vedic.

The legend splits the confrontation of opposing cultures straight into two parts: (a) Indra-Visnu-Brahma-Airävata-the Solar Line of mon- archy-Vedic sacrifice, and (b) Angira-Atharvan way of thinking in which could be included the traits of Kapila, Bhrgu and Janhu. The Sagaras, keen on the Vedic way, always resented the spread of the colonisation of Angira-Atharvan culture, the Samkhya-Yoga philosophy in the lower Gangetic regions near the sea. The Sagaras disturbed the Kapilas and were overwhelmed and absorbed into the culture of the soil. They attempted to revive some of their cultural traits, and wanted acceptance of the Visṇu-way. The Ganges symbolised a mixing of a fair amount of

progress. They realised that the chances for the spread of pure Vedism were over, so far as the Gangetic basin was concerned. Survival depended on synthesis and compromise. For generations the two ways, even struggling, lived side by side. This helped a syncretic mixture of cultures. The people of the lower Ganges basin, who were Kapila follow- ers, once called the Asuras, now became mixed with the Devas; and with the growth of Tantra and Saivism the Hindus began a new life. The law-books of Yajnavalkya and Parāśara superseded Manu's. A synthesised religion, which could integrate both the Visnu and the Siva ways into one, could succeed.

Contrary to the common belief, the Indian soil had been accommo- dating a people of an anthropological stock quite different from the Aryan stock. After the Aryan conquest of arms, for centuries a gradual con- quest of the Vedic culture by the indigenous culture took place, with the result that Hinduism today proudly displays within its Vedic frame- work a number of ancient traits characteristic of the various indigenous peoples who lived in the various parts of India. Any student of anthro- pology and ancient prehistoric archaeology knows this for a fact.

The Indo-Gangetic plain was one of the major parts of the Indian subcontinent. Even this section was divided into four major sections: (1) The valley of the five rivers and the Sindhu; (2) the valley of the Ganges; (3) the valley of the Brahmaputra; and (4) the mountain- region of the Himalayas. The last two, as the home of Sakti and mystic cults, always got into trouble with the other two, where Vedism, as toned by the immigrants from India's North-Western frontiers, prevailed by and large. This kind of moderated Vedism could claim to have inspired the emergence of Kashmir Saivism. The Saktism of Nepal, Bhutan, Sikkim and Tibet influenced Assam and the Brahmaputra valley, where a Great Mother prevailed over all other deities. Siva was a consort of this Mother Deity. We must remember that in these regions the society was predominantly matriarchal.

The Lower parts of the Ganges were an exception to all these. Here the two valleys meet; the Ganges and the Brahmaputra meet at a con- Even up to the time of the Maha- fluence and then flow south to the sea. bharata Anga, Banga, Kalinga, Sumha were known as

places outside the pale of Aryan culture. Bhagadatta as the king of Assam has been mentioned; mention has also been made of the cultures of Manipur and the Naga-regions. But all these regions were clearly outside the accepted Aryanised society. The point is that this was a region where tribalism, totemism, Tantricism prevailed independent of an over-riding influence of Vedic culture.

We have been noting again and again the signs of an Indo-Sumerian culture, or Phoenician culture flourishing along the coast-lands from Delphos and Crete to Aden, and from Babylon and Ur to Mohenjo-daro; again, according to the latest excavations, from Mohenjo-daro to the Lower Gangetic deltas round the peninsula. As we observe more and more closely to this movement of a particular culture, which we called Angirasa-Atharvan-Bhrgu-Kapila culture (or Samkhya-Yoga culture), a sense dawns on us that the Tamila land could have been its headquarters. This is not a unique theory. Scholars have been working on it; but oppositions to this have been raised by others more inspired by political or chauvinistic considerations than by a spirit of scholarship.

Whilst trying to analyse and interpret these legends we are obviously exposing ourselves to scholarly ridicule. Instead of taking very good care of our pace we are behaving as a runaway wild horse. We are covering hundreds of centuries, and thousands of miles, and millions of people with scores of cultures almost in one stride. Analysis of historical events calls for a more studied and calculated pace. Steadiness is of the essence here. We are, indeed aware of the fact that it takes centuries before syncretised foreign traits, synthesised ways of a variegated admixture of cultures could crystallise into an appreciable form to be comprehended and distinguished. Cultural upheavals take time to percolate, settle down and bear results. But we also expect, in a book like this, a little indulgence from the patient reader, who would take a panoramic view of these broad events of history, and associate these events with the life- rhythms of the cultures which flow before us.

If the river valleys, specially the deltas, have, through the millenniums, been influencing the culture that came from the hinterland, then the turmoil that took place between the

Sagaras and the Kapilas at the con- fluence of the Ganges and the Sea should bear significant interest to our study. The Sagaras had attempted to flout the Kapilas, and got des- troyed. They wanted to save their face. For them a free access to the sea and to the sea-trade was dependent on the co-operation of the Kapilas of the Lower Bengal. Through the centuries an Aryanised culture had been spreading along the Indo-Gangetic plain. A mass of population was on the move. A settlement of the old feud was necessary. The price was simple: acceptance of the river-cult. The Aryans were quite opposed to this. The Vedas do not 'worship' rivers although rivers as rivers have been eulogised. The indigenous religions did. Nile, Euphra- tis, Tigris, Jordan, Sindhu, Sapta Sindhu were prominent names in the indigenous religions of the Ancient World. We know of making live- sacrifices (sometimes human) to be made to the rain-gods and sea-gods from the times of Poseidon and Theseus. In a simple verse the Hindus today purify all oblation-water by remembering daily the Ganges, Yamuna, Godavari, Sarasvati, Narmada, Sindhu and Kavery.

This River-worship had to be accepted by the proud Aryans. The Kapilas demanded it in case they were to accept the Sräddha-Tarpana, or the Crematory funeral rites of the Sagaras. This was after all settled. Moreover for the benefit of the people of the lower deltas the course of the Ganges had to be changed direct south for opening up a Western-channel of river trade with the sea. This Bhagiratha got done. The Bhagirathi as a Western Channel of the Ganges still bears the name of King Bhagiratha, and remains a monument to this struggle between the Sagaras and the Kapilas.

In the course of this achievement the Ganges-people had also made the Sagara people submit to the principle of synthesis as is evidenced by the humiliation of Airavata. Similar syntheses with other culture- forms have been recorded through other incidents described in the legend, e.g., the synthesis with the non-Aryan tribes in making the Ganges flow through the matted lock of Siva; or with the Vedic people by making Ganga flow from Visnu's foot and Brahma's brass-vessel; or with the Janhu-people, and lastly with the Bhagiratha and Kapila people, through the clashes described.

The Ganges is a symbol of the synthesis, of which Hinduism is the objective form. The Ganges is as holy to the Visnu-people as to the Siva-people. On the Ganges stand the two great pilgrimages, Hari- dvär for the Vaisnavas, and Kedaranatha and Varanasi for the Saivas. The gradual expansion of Saivism in spite of the reluctance of the Aryans, loaded with a snobbish pride in exclusiveness, is unfolded with the legend of the Ganges. The Ganges and the funeral-rites and liberation have been closely knitted in every Hindu-mind, irrespective of sectarian differences.

Sage Kapila of the legend had asked Amśuman to bring Ganga, and wash the ashes of the Sagara-children away. This could have meant that Kapila was insisting on the Sagaras to drain the lower Ganges- swamps and the sand dunes by proper irrigation, as a condition for accept- ing on their the Aryan sway. This could be done by linking the main current with the open sea, i.e., by 'bringing' the Ganges to his 'hermitage', which used to be on the beaches where the Ganges flowed into the sea. The sudden Southward flow of the Ganges in Western Bengal (near the Rajmahal hills) still appears to have taken a course which had been deliberately constructed by human labour.

For generations the progenies of the Aryan king had, therefore, to invent the scientific means of solving the problem posed by the menace of silting of the mouth of the Ganges. Ultimately the Sagaras mastered the science of irrigation. Both Amśuman and Bhagiratha, according to the details of the legend, had undertaken 'penances' for preparing themselves for the task. They probably had undergone training both in the Vindhya region and in the Himalayas, in order to find out more facts about the nature of the river, its actual course, and the gradual force it gathered in the long course of covering more than 2000 miles. They decided to accept the challenge, and to release the flow of the Ganges from the silt-sands which had blocked its passage to the open sea. But as an integral part of this project, the course of the river had to be found out; and a full knowledge of the behaviour of the turbulent flow had to be acquired. This was done ultimately by Bhagiratha. Bhagiratha underwent a long hazardous 'penance'. It signified his training and schooling. As this posed a technical difficulty for the young Bhagiratha, he took a long course in the

Himalaya region. We know from the legend that ultimately he did succeed in draining the land, but not before he had himself sought the favours of Siva himself, i.e., of the Siva followers of the mountain. Having overcome, all the technical difficulties, now Bhagiratha found time to attend to the cultural part. He was aware of the struggle between the Vedic and the non-Vedic people. The new colony settled by him in the Gangetic delta would not earn sufficient respect from the ancient noble families, unless he could successfully bring about an integration of the two cultures. This was more important as an objective; the dredging of the silted Ganges being only a means.

This he did by offering to the Aryans an extension of their sphere of influence over the whole of Northern India, East of the Brahmävarta (Punjab and Kashmir), on condition that they accepted partially the Samkhya civilisation of Kapila. The Vedic snobbery against the Siva- people had to be given up, and the rights of the common man were to be accepted by the Vedic aristocracy. The pride of blood had to give way to the needs for expansion of cultural life. Indra in the name of Viṣṇu could keep his high position in pantheistic hierarchy, but the spiritual greatness and uniqueness of Siva had to be generally accepted. The democratic Saivas had no caste and no monarch. They believed in the brotherhood of man, equality of opportunity and intermarriages. Eugenically they had little faith in racial purism and the implied superio- rity. Philosophically they believed that there being no definite proof for a godhead, it is impossible to accept an over-Lord divinity. Accep- tance of divinities and of their emblems only manifests man's desire to reach a supreme truth, which really is the common good of man on earth and complete peacefulness of the Soul.

This philosophy, together with an unrestricted set-up of a free society, was regarded by the Vedic people as contrary to culture. So the con- flict dragged on and on for generations and generations. But Bhagiratha, as a pioneer King was determined to include the entire Gangetic plain into the Aryavarta, abode of the Aryans. That is why he had undertaken to prospect the course of the Ganges, and rehabilitate the Aryan-way over the vast and prosperous land, by just accepting Siva, and his greatness.

So, the Ganges was originated from Viṣṇu, a Vedic god. He is the Sun. Bhagiratha told the Aryans that whereas all other rivers from the Himalayas were originated from the lakes and springs, there is no visible source to which the actual spring of the Ganges could perceptibly be traced. The Ganges really springs out from a cave-mouth at a height of more than ten thousand feet, from where the stream falls on thick bush and knotted forest- growths until it comes out in three streams descending at a rate of 3,500 feet to a mile. But before appearing at the cave-mouth the stream must have originated somewhere. This explains the legendary reference to the Ganges falling from heaven. Similarly, the stream falling on the heavy bushes below the gorging cave, and vanishing for a while from human sight before reappearing again in three bouncing clear foamy streams, also explains the reference to the matted locks, the imprison- ment within the locks, and subsequent release in three streams. Then it had been stated that she broke the pride of Airavata and broke his tusk. This is the way of the epics to record any victory over an adversary; in this case the adversary was representative of Indra. Then comes the episode of the sage, Janhu. This is a counterbalancing episode which records the superiority of the pure Vedic way, over the way of the synthesis which the Ganges represented. The Muni Janhu, whose complete destruction this synthesising movement actually had attempted, ultimately proved too tough for the threat, and in the process the Ganges- way i.e., the

movement for the Viṣnu-Siva culture got lost for a while, It drives home the fact that the progress of the synthesising Ganges-way would have been impossible unless it took into its stride the 'Muni' way. This was the way of the Yogis, of which Säkya-Muni, Natha-Muni, Mani and the Essines were just types. The 'Muni'-kind of thinking too had to be confronted and won over in the interest of the community. 'Ṛsis' differ from 'Munis,' as Veda from non-Veda. It also insinuates that the later progress of the Ganges and the sanctity of its heritage was a favour conferred upon her by the assimilation of several trends. Henceforth the flow of the Ganges symbolised a synthesised (Šiva and Viṣnu) Hindu culture. The novel attempt of Bhagiratha, namely, co-ordinating several feuding ways through the evolution of a compact Hindu society, had to put up with a stiff opposition from the Ṛsis; but in appreciation of the situa- tion, and under the influence of

the arguments of the then Aryan leader Bhagiratha, the stubborn resistance acquiesced in favour of the novel experiment that was aimed at a greater inter-racial and cultural synthesis.

Thus Visṇu and Siva together made the Ganga so holy. Then the pride of Indra and the pride of Ganga, i.e., the Vedic pride and the non- Vedic pride merged into a union. The river was accepted by both. As it reached the sea, Bhagiratha got the silts dredged; cut a new canal from North to South direct. The necessity of keeping the Ganges always dredged, for keeping the water healthy is, to this day, honoured and cared after by the government of the State.

Thus one would see how these so-called legends are not really as legendary as they appear to the novice or to the prejudiced. To the ex- perts these legends shine as great achievements of human intellect which could weld together history, culture, geography and philosophy so aesthetically and artistically. It took the Sagara's full three generations to colonise the Gangetic plains. To this colonisation and integration the Hindus in India owe their cultural identity and integrity.

V

Ganapati or Ganesa

Karapatri in Sri Bhagavat Tattva" explains Gana as 'category'; and Ganapati as the Lord of the categories of comprehension. It has also been described as the principle through which the relation between the macrocosm and microcosm is comprehended.

The Rg Veda uses this word; so does the Ganapati Upanisad. The former says that Ganapati is the Lord of Ganas; and the leading teacher whose guidance shows way to the Brahman. The Mahabharata mention- ed51 him as the pen-man for Vyasa, the author. We find Ganapati mentioned in Agni-Purana and Yajnavalkya Smrti.

Quite different from this tradition, Ganapati has also been described as a Tantra-deity. The Ganapatya sect considers him as the Supreme. In any Smärta (ritualistic) rite Ganapati is

regarded as one of the chief five deities.53 Ganesa or Ganapati is espoused to two wives; Success (Siddhi), and Prosperity (Ṛddhi). Gaṇeśa is also said to have espoused a selection of nine types of vegetations tied together, and called Nava- patrika. Kartikeya Skanda also has the name Visakha, and as such is regarded to have espoused trees. As sons of the Mother both keep their identity as plant gods, and remind us of the Gana-culture. Of his names the most significant are Vinayaka (great leader); Ganesa (Lord of the Ganas); Vighna-Vināšana (destroyer of obstacles); Gajanana (Elephant- headed); Gajadhipa (Lord of elephant); Jyestha-Raja (King of the elders).55

Working on the Rg Vedic verse, Gaṇānām Tva Ganapatim Gavamahe a number of works mentions Ganapati in a manner as if he were a Vedic god. But the Ganesa legends show him to be post-Saivic and post-Tantric.

The passage in the Maiträyani Samhitä has been called an interpola- tion:56 the Puranas and the Yajnavalkya Smrti, of course, are works special- ly written for smoothening out the greater aim of synthesising conflicting opinions of the Vedic and non-Vedic ways into one stream of Hinduism.

The Purana legends discribing Ganapati's birth confirm this theory. From Mahabharata and Siva Purana we have the following legend. All other legends are but recensions of this one.

Siva's household could not have been an ideal one for the luxuries of a princess, as the Mountain-Maid Pärvati had been. Once, whilst she had been bathing, unannounced and unconcerned, Śiva surprised her at a moment which could prove to be the most embarrassing even between a husband and a wife. This made her think of providing for her an attendant who could act as a butler-cum-valet-cum-guard. She directly started getting herself such an attendant. The materials were quite handy and unpretentious. At the moment, whilst she had been planning for securing her privacy, she had been cleaning her body with an oily-creamy preparation of herbs and milk. Through her efforts a lump of scurf had gathered. The material was not too much. But after all it was the effect of Sakti's

residual part and parcel. (Remember the shavings of the Sun-god when lathed by Tvasta? See the legend of Viva- svan and Saranyu.) The lump was filled with Power and Grace. In a way the model was Parvatî's own baby; a body from a body. The baby she designed out of this scurf was not exactly a model of beauty. He was a chubby, funny, jolly pet, dwarfish, with a pot-belly. All the same the impish little thing amused her; and directly

she breathed life into it, and named it the leader of the Hosts (Gaṇeśa); Her Majesty's Chief Butler and Body Guard. As he had to stand guard, he was specially armed with a mace (matter), a crook (to chastise Tamas and awaken intelligence) and a discus (Yoga-symbol of Eternity). These, together with a conch for blowing (Pranayama), which all guards must be equipped with as an instrument of fore-warning, necessitated four hands,

which were arranged for (four hands form the cross-sign, which stands to symbolise Space and Time). As a mark of his guardmanship he belonged to the group of at- tendants, or the Ganas. These were the traditional Siva followers. True to their uniform, Gaṇeśa sported a belt and a sash of serpents; but had as his pet a mouse, a prober of secrets and

subterranean agents. Serpent- Mouse (Gaṇeśa); Peacock-Serpent (Skanda); Bull-Lion (Siva-Pärvati) combinations within one family group emphasise the Yogic demand of want of conflict and attainment of equilibrium (Nir-duanda).

The benign Mother was quite proud of her model. The chubby baby pleased her. He was asked to guard her doors, and permit none, till the person was announced, and a sanction

obtained.

All this happened in a trice, as the will of a deity like Sakti herself would expect to be. And Siva, innocent of these developments, on his return from his daily Yoga, appeared before the threshold of his home, only to be checked by his novel imp of a guard. Siva took it to be a joke. Soon he realised that things were not as funny after all.

The little boy with curly hair and three-eyes was serious. Disgusted, he sent for his Gaṇas, and soon a skirmish arose in which the Ganas did not fare too well, and actually let Šiva down. They were well-beaten, and eventually took to their heels. This roused the usually

sedate Siva. He returned; snubbed and furied he rushed, then attacked; but before long he too found out that things were not going easy with him either. In that melee, after all, the little baby Ganesa happened to miss his head. [But the incident of the 'loss of head' has yet another version. It is also a significant version, and reminds us of the legend of the child-eating Saturn as described by Homer. We have also to remember that in Tantra and Yajnavalkya Smrti he is regarded as a 'demon'. In Skanda and Maudgala Puranas he has been described as an 'Obstacle Incarnate', who destroyed all Yajñas. Indra had requested Kala or Siva to assist him in overcoming an Indra-hating prince by the name of Abhinandana, as well as such priests as Vasistha who constantly looked for humiliating Indra's sway. Indra could not afford to be bypassed easily. (It appears that some of the Vasisthas were confirmed Tantrics.)

This adds a new picture to Ganesa. No longer the chubby-baby pet, he becomes a part of mischief; an imp; and as such it suits the Saturn-legend of Homer.]

The two recensions run parallel up to the birth of the baby. But in the first version Siva finds himself facing a bereaved Mother, an accusing wife, in tears for the loss of her child at the hand of her husband. Not an enjoyable position for an old husband at all. He promptly places the head on the child, who jumped to the arms of a not too exacting mother.

Šiva did that to please his wife. But he laid a condition that he should avoid the touch of the planetary god Sani (Saturn), son of Sun and Savarṇā (Chaya), whose influence on children was not too propitious. He was known as Krura-Drsti (evil-eyed). (As Kona or Krda, his name reminds the Greek Keres, or yet more of Cronos, a titan, father of Zeus by Rhea. It is interesting to note that in the Western as well as in the Eastern epics Saturn keeps consistent to his reputation of being a destroyer of babies.)

The coming of a baby to Siva's household was a great occasion for the immortals. All of them assembled to celebrate the event; and great gifts were brought to be presented to the divine child. All gods had been making their gifts one by one. Then came Saturn's turn.

Parvati, remembering Siva's warning, hesitated. But which mother would dis- appoint an eager and sincere visitor and admirer, the pleasure of blessing Parvati decided to find a way her child, specially on a day of festivity? out. Presenting a child to the view of an eager admirer would certainly not place the child under any one's evil influence, she thought. She would hold the baby for Saturn to see; but not to touch. In such vitally dramatic cases, accidents must happen. While making his gift, Saturn's hand happened to touch the baby, who in a moment of baby-hilarity, had thrust his eager hand towards the beautiful and attractive gift; and it happened: At once the beautiful head, shining and smiling, covered with a crop of curly hair, fell off the child's trunk. The aghast assemblage of the immortals watched the decapitated body in the arms of the horrified mother, too shaken to utter a sound.

[It is only in these details of the dislodging of the head that the versions differ. The differences are esoterically significant for two forms of Yogic trends.]

From this point the two recensions go along the same course. Viṣṇu, the ever-alert and enterprising, took a stock of the catastrophic situation, and came out with a creative suggestion. Of course, it had been the eagerness and carelessness of a mere Graha (Titan) which had caused the accident; and, therefore, it would just be proper in the fitness of things and fairness to all, that a Titan alone should pay for it. 'A Titan's head had to be brought immediately', came Visnu's suggestion, fair and firm. He would make an immediate surgical operation, and stitch together the limbs. Why the original head could not be used Visṇu never explained; he made, instead, the demand for a new head to be freshly detached from a Titan's body. We could imagine that the original face, in the progress of falling from the height of the standing mother's arms, must have suffered from ugly injuries; or perhaps, the scurf-made head was turned to chips and dust. So, if he could be supplied with a fresh head, he could operate a divine piece of surgery, and the decapitated could be recapitated.

Now the problem crystallised into the vital question of the supply of the requisitioned head. Who was to supply it? Of course, no immortal could supply with one, for the

immortals' head could not either be severed or otherwise be used for surgery. That would be absurd.

In the melee two questions remained unanswered. First, as has already been pointed out,
why the head of the child was not used? Certainly that piece would have been quite handy. And the second, how did the child, which as Pärvati's child should have been immortal, suffer the indignity? Children of the immortals often suffer indignities, even death, through divine errors, or a chance transgression of strange divine conditions laid down. Readers of myths of all lands should have noticed such accidents. Poor Achilles could be immortalised but for his heels, as we know. But in this case, what suffered was the matter, the material mass which had been enlivened by Sakti's Power. Ganapati would lead the Devas in worship, but nothing materially composed could be immortalised as a Deva; he has to remain as Gana, Siva's follower.

The answer, however, to the first of the questions is that the child's head, for the story at least, would be useless; and to the second one was that immortality as a boon was yet to be conferred on Ganesa, who, strictly speaking, had been, till the time of the accident, only a guarding attendant, and a titan himself. Both the points are significant for the story as it proceeds.

The Titans, as different from the Devas, were distinguished in the Hindu Myths by a classification which made them appear as second-raters to the Devas. They were not fully Vedic. They believed in Atharvan and astrological rites. Saturn was one of these Titan-Deities. Planet- worship has never been the Vedic creed. It would not be impossible to infer that by the Titans the great epic-writers always meant those interme- diary beings who stood between the two outstanding cultures; and in whom the traditions of both
sought to find a refuge. The Graha-rites suffered for a while a transitional phase. In strict Vedic assemblies they were regarded as sub-class. But they were condescendingly tolerated as pet foster-children adopted by the Devas or the immortals. They were regarded as being the very creations of the immortals. It would be, therefore, quite fitting to assume that these Titans represented the personi- fications of a transitional stage of

some cultural syncretism, and symbolised a cultural synthesis in the process of being crystallised (Vedic Mongols?)

So the gods applied one of the Titan (or non-Aryan) laws for the purpose of securing a head. That law was a 'a head for a head'.57

To kill a life in order to save a life, even if that be the life of the only child of Parvati herself, would be a heinous crime in the eyes of the Deva-morals. The Titan law, however, came handy in this situation. It was one of the rigid ancient Titan laws that none of its members should go to sleep resting the head to the North. (Naturally the Devas and the Titans were at cross-roads, and the latter felt more friendly to the Asuras and Humans as the legend of Prometheus shows. Leaning to the Nordic Aryans was considered anti-Titan and anti-Asura.) The North, in Tantra, is reserved as the special location (Loka) for the Devas. As such it would not be at all improper to sever the head of a being, if one could be discovered to be violating the law. The law said that any Titan who would be sleeping with head resting to the North, would forfeit his head. A great search ensued. One of the Titans, Airavata, the elephant of Indra, was found sleeping the drunken-sleep, carelessly leaning his head to the North. Immediately he was decapitated; and the elephant head was

stitched back to the trunk of Gaṇeśa's body. Eversince then, Ganesa, the divine child of Parvati, had to sport an elephant's head.

(In this way, it is remarkable, Airavata's discomfitures have provided fun and drama to a number of legends such as, Durvasã and the Churning of the Ocean; Ganga and Bhagiratha; Ganesa. It is obvious that Airavata has a greater significance than just an elephant. Of course, it is Indra's ride. Indra symbolises the Devas and the Vedas-and considering that Airavata, along with other names, guarded the Tantric Yantras as Dig-gajas Guarding elephants of Space-we discover an underlying Synthesising trend in the legends. We discover that through these sym- bols and Vähanas the writers of esoteric literature meant some cultural facts also.)

But the Nagas and the Ganas of Siva wanted a redress for this ignomi- nous patch-work that Visnu did to their beloved Pärvati's child. They were eager to secure for the chubby baby a specially important place in the hierarchy of the gods. Although a guard, a Titan, as Pärvati's pet child his status had to be raised. The child of Sakti had to be categorised as a full-fledged deity. It was then decided between Visnu and Siva that in future, precedence in prayers be always given to Ganesa, who as the Lord of the Ganas, would be expected to keep all disturbances and obstacles away from any Hindu ceremonies, thereby putting a permanent stop to the continued feuds between Ganas, Nagas, Asuras on the one side, and Devas on the other. Presence of Gaṇeśa in Hindu worship, like that of Mahavira, is an admission of a synthesising process between two forceful cultures.

To this day in all Hindu orthodox sacramental prayers the first invocation is reserved for the elephant-headed, serpent-garlanded and four-armed red-white deity, a dear baby-eternal, beloved of all the Hindus. But in most cases, like the idol of Mahavira, his idol is kept apart from the sanctum sanctuary, generally at the entrance of the shrine.

The story is highly significant and interesting. But the underlying message has to be worked out piece by piece, and incident by incident, till the full meaning could be grasped. The variety of recensions in the legend only proves that the narration of the incidents was to follow strictly the symbolism of the gradual acceptance of non-Vedic cults into the family of Hinduism. As the details differed from people to people, so the narratives differ in details, which does not matter as long as the inner- truth remains intact. This also signifies that the legends in themselves do not constitute any historicity. The different interpretations of the words Gana, Gaja, etc., and the incorporation of the elephant god into the Puranas by themselves show that whilst Vedism was being spread, much of Tantricism and cultism was also being assimilated. The most significant part in these synthesising legends is the fact that the role of the Vedas has always been allowed to play a determining part. Gaṇeśa or Skanda has been related to the Vedic origin in one way or the other.

In this legend, again, we find Saivism and Saktism are joining to meet several traits: (1) the trait of worshipping deities made of clay modelling; (2) acceptance of elephant-cult current amongst the elephant infested tribes of the mountainous part of India, particularly of the South of India and Nilgiri hills; (3) the cult of worshipping the river-clay as a symbol of Fertility; (4) the incorporation of the planet-worshipping Sumerian-Babylonian trait; (5) the submission of the Vedic Indra- Superiority to accommodate the tribal rites and cults through Tantra, Agama and the Angirasa-Atharvan way.

Gana has been interpreted to mean 'Category', although scholars have successfully explained the word to relate it to such honoured Vedic reasures as Tat-Tvam-Asi.58 It has been explained to relate the supreme truth of Anoraniyan Mahato-Mahiyan (Infinitely smaller than the smallest, yet infinitely greater than the greatest is this Self, set in the heart of every creature). It has been described as 'the dwarf', 'the thumb-sized Purusa', 'The One who is extended ten-fingers more than space compre- hended'. It has been attempted to mean Gana as an idea that relates the macrocosm in the cosmic process of creation to the microcosm. The word Gaja (elephant) has been explained as 'Ga', (i.e.) what the spirit, at the end of Yogic trance, accepts to be final goal; and 'Ja', (i.e.) what the spirit regards as projection into being, Ga-Ja, has thus been explained as a mystic word meaning the cycle of spirit between emancipation and vivification, coming-in and going-out of being.

But all these explanations have come from Hindu authorities after the cult of the elephant worship has been absorbed by Vedism. The indige- nous cult of an elephant God was quite popular amongst the tribals, and then amongst the Agama Tamil saints. Those of the tribals, with the help of the indigenous Asuras and Angirasa people (also termed as Räkṣasas) who had been disturbing the Yajñas, and against whom Visvamitra sought help of Dasaratha and borrowed Rama and Lakṣmaṇa, and those whom Rama subdued in Dandaka, Janasthana and other southern regions, were these Saivic Gaṇas. Gana has been again and again mentioned as followers of Siva. This meaning of the word Gana, which means 'Mass' (as opposite to class) or as 'hordes' (as opposite to army) is quite prominent in all Siva legends.

Further, the presence of the serpent-symbol, the acceptance of a zoo- morphic ride as quite popular in Egyptian, Cretan, Sumerian Tantras, the use of the red colour (Sindir, Mercuric Oxide, HgO, a product from Mercury used as a base for various medicines) leave no doubt what- soever about the god's association with the indigenous culture of India, the Dravidas. These 'Hordes' had created disasters time and again. The vedic settlers did good by propitiating them, and coming to an under- standing. Bhakti took over from pure Vedism.

How could they do this? Only through Saivism. To include this elephant-cult within the Siva lore would be the most correct thing to do.

Ganesa was thus made out of the very body of the Mountain Maid. He is made to have a clash with Siva's hordes, where he establishes his lordship of the Gaṇas. He then accepts the Siva-Agama and Nigama, as taught by the Mother whose initiation makes Ganesa recognise Siva as the Lord of creation. What comes from the Saivic sources (Agama), and what came from Sakti sources (Nigama) both became one in Ganesa. So armed in Tantra he proceeds to get introduced to the Devas. There comes the clash. In this clash the astrological cults of the West also joined. Tantra, Saivism, Planet-cults, river-cults and elephant-cults all joined hands in this legend.

This clash was intensified by the involvement of the Ganas and the Mother-worshippers.

In our legend on Varanasi, quoted both from Vayu Purana and Skanda Purana we refer to a Ksemaka Ganesa as a 'guarding daimon' of Siva. Amongst the Maheśvara cults who worshipped Uma-Mahekvara, Bhairavi and Bhairava such Gana-guards formed parts of mystic rituals. The attempt to relate this aspect of the Ganapati rites to the Vedas by quoting the hymn (Gaṇānām Tva Ganapatim Gavamahe etc.) already referred to serves yet again an evidence of the supreme nobility of the Hindu philo- sophy that not only preached, but also practised the Hindu art of coexistence.

The compromise was made. The Ganas would not interfere with any form of Vedic, Tantric or Agamic worship provided the pride of place was awarded to this God, who,

now on, would bear the stamp of the Gana, as well as the Veda. He would be called the 'Remover of Obstacles' in Life. His invocation done, other rites could go ahead. The very form of Gaṇeśa stands in evidence of this inference. He is painted half-white, half-red; white for the Vedic and red for the tribes. The elephant's head is a stern reminder of the decapitation of Indra's pride, and his subsequent acquiescence to join the worship of Ganesa. The third eye, the serpent and the use of the crook in his hand are indicative of his Šiva- Gana character. The rat and clay-modelling are reminiscent of the zoomorphic religions which had polarised to the peninsula. Vaisnavism has also been depicted through the conch and the discus that he holds.

Ganesa's head, an elephant-head, has a broken tusk. One of the two tusks is missing. This gives him the honorific Eka-Danta (The one tusked one). It is constant reminder of the silly encounter that Airavata had with the torrents of the Ganges. Through this symbolism the Ganga legend and the Ganesa legend merge into one sequence: namely, integration of the Aryan and the non-Aryan forms in shaping Hinduism.

But the fact of one tusk has been associated with yet one more legend. It is said that the sage Parasurama, the descendent of Bhrgu had the misfortune of opposing Ganesa in demanding instant admission into the chambers of Siva and Parvati. The divines were resting; and Ganesa would not permit. That started a battle. Parasurama was finding it hard to subjugate the little dwarf, who proved to be too strong for him. But in the fight Ganesa lost a tusk. Of course, Siva came and settled the matter, and made them friends. It is obvious that this denotes a struggle between the Tantra that Parasurama followed as a Pasupata, and the Ganesa-Tantra that stood apart from the Pasupatas. Their compromise by Siva indicates that both the Tantras found their resort under the broad umbrella of Saivism.

The literature that later interprets the spiritual significance of the Ganapati Upanisad, provides justification of a phase of cultural synthesis and achievement. Taittiriya Aranyaka refers to Ganapati indirectly, and Maitrayanî Samhitä mentions it in an admittedly inter- polated passage. What the Puranas and the Mahabharata say, streng-

thens the inference that the great Gaṇeśa-legend is yet another instance of Indo-Aryan synthesis with the indigenous forms of the subcontinent.

In the Vedas we find Rudra with his hosts called the Ganas whose leader was Ganapati. The Taittiriya Brähamana mentions a god Dantin along with Kartikeya and Nandi, and it is probable that this Dantin was the same as the later elephant faced god. Besides the Gaṇeśa Vinayakas are also associated with Rudra who himself is sometimes called Vinayaka. The Manava-Grhya- Sutra mentions four Vinayakas who were supposed to possess men, and cause them evil; and by the time of the Yajnavalkya Smrti these four Vinayakas had become one Ganapati Vinayaka. Ganesa is mentioned only at a few places in the Mahabharata, and he is not here the god Ganesa, for Viṣṇu himself is mentioned as Ganeśvara. It should be noted that the invocatory verse with which the epic begins, according to some MSS., has been omitted in the critical edition of the text.

There is no definite evidence of a Gaṇeśa-cult in India before the 5th century A.D. There is a sculptural evidence of his popularity from the fifth century onwards, although no inscription has been found referring either to Ganesa or to Ganapati as God until after the Gupta Period. The first stage of Ganesa's Embryonic existence must have belonged to a far earlier period. The Mathura school yields us a compara- tively early likeness of the deity which Foucher is inclined to regard as an archaic image of Ganesa, 62

It was since that time that no Ganas, or Siva-people, disturbed the Visṇu-people; and the divine emblem of Ganesa stood forever as a solemn and sacred reminder of a pledge at any Hindu ceremonial or auspicious rite. The Gaṇeśa-figure guards every temple. His Yantra, the Svastika, ensures success. Success (Siddhi) and Prosperity (Rddhi), as has been noted, were reputed to be his alter-egos. Ganesa was known as Vighnaraja, Ganapati and Hedamba, each name literally reminding of an assurance given by the non-Vedic Saivas and Saktas to the Vedic, that for all time to come the Ganas would respect the principle of 'Live and let Live'. A period of assimilation, integration, conciliation and re-orientation started.

The elephant's head reminds also of the Pasupati (Animal-Lord) cult; the 'four-hands' symbolises the Sun-cross, or the wheel (Svastika) motive. The Naga-Garland and the Lotus seat, again, denoted the accep tance of the indigenous way. In the incident involving Daksa and Siva, it may be recalled, a compromise was made when an animal-head was fixed on a human body. A cold comparison of these half-human half-animal gods in Hinduism inevitably reminds of the Egyptian and Sumerian Zoomorphism. The Hindu culture has really been a very broad-based one. It has given us the belief that coexistence is a religious duty for maintaining social peace for the good of all.

VI VISNU-SIVA RIVALRY and the LINGAM LEGENDS

Bhrgu Curses Siva

Bhrgu, the great sage had to give an opinion on who was the greatest of the three gods in the triad Brahma, Viṣṇu and Siva. He went to Brahmä. Due to his self-contained equanimity he did not pay attention to the great sage. He was not considered worthy of any special adoration by Brahma. Then Bhrgu went to Siva, who was as usual, in union with his alter-ego as he always happens to be; and Bhrgu was asked to wait. Bhrgu cursed and declared that he would be worshipped in that very form (namely, in the form of Lingam connected with Yoni), since Śiva considered such union to be of more importance than the act of paying honour to sages. Then he went to Visnu, who was asleep at the time. Bhrgu impatient to wait, pulled him up from his sleeping state by a kick. Instead of being annoyed at the incivility of the sage, Visnu politely enquired if the kick had caused any hurt to the tender foot of the Brahmana. This humility made Bhrgu declare Visnu as the greatest of three gods. And since then Śiva has been worshipped as a united figure of Siva-Sakti.

Siva Emasculates

The Creator ordered Šiva to help creation of life within the water, and sent him down, whilst Brahma was attending to the upper strata. Siva took his time doing this, and gradually surfaced up only to find that the world had already been populated by varied

forms of life. Annoyed, he tore out his Lingam, and cast it away as being of no further use. This terrible act of Siva disturbed the creation, where gods, under the leader- ship of Brahma, settled his place as Rudra, and accepted him as one of them in the Pantheon. The Vedic Gods agreed to share their offerings with Rudra; and all were advised to accept Rudra as of equal status, if not more, with the Vedic gods. Rudra's share had to be shared first,63

The Fiery Lingam

In the ocean of Infinity where time alone made waves, the Creator Brahma was surprised to find himself in absolute loneliness with a lotus as his seat. He wanted to get to the root of the lotus. But he discovered a sleeping Being, and he waked him up. On waking, the youthful Being asked Brahma, "Child, who art thou?" Nārāyaṇa's words annoyed Brahma, and he protested, "How dare you call me a child, when I am your superior, elder, and the only Creator?" "So think you, dear child," said Nārāyaṇa gently, "the fact is there is none superior to me." As the two clashed thus, there sprang out a fiery pillar of intense brilliance between them, and they were held spellbound. They decided to find out the mystery of the pillar of golden fire. Brahmå went up, and Nārāyana down. None found the end, but Brahma, through false wit- nesses, attempted to prove that he had found the end. For this falsification his adoration was stopped, and Nārāyaṇa's adoration took its place, and the Pillar's symbolic representation Om represented the spirit of the three Gods. [This legend of Vayu Puräna (Ch. 55) has been cited in another form (p. 926). See also, Devi Bhagavatam (V: 34)].

Dakṣa-Pinaka-Visnu

At the sacrifice of Dakṣa, when he had aroused Siva's anger, Siva threw his Pinaka bow at Daksa; but Visnu held it up and threw it back at Siva. Śiva was overwhelmed.

Rama and Parasurama

As King Dasaratha with the four brides of his four newly wedded sons was returning to Ayodhya from Mithila, on the way Jamadagni's terrible son the Brahmana Rama of the Axe (Parasurama) challenged the Ksatriya Rama of Ayodhya, who had broken down the Siva-bow at Janaka's sacrifice. Rama took up the challenge. Parasurama dared him to string his Visṇu-bow. Rama did it and aimed an arrow at Parasurama at once, bringing him to submission. (Axe is a Yoni or Sakti symbol.)

Bana and Krsna

Bana was a powerful Asura King, and through Siva's boon was invincible. His daughter, Uşd, however, formed a liaison with Krsna's grandson Aniruddha, who had gone to Bana's place through clandestine methods arranged by Uşă, who herself had great occult powers, besides being assisted by other companions of greater power. Bana came to know of this, and interpreted this as the heinous intrigue by the crafty Yadavas to humiliate the great Saiva monarch. He ordered Aniruddha's arrest and execution. But the grandson of Krsna was no common guy to reckon with. To the great surprise and embarrassment of Bana the young hero put up a very stiff fight. Bana for a while got confused, and looked for more power, more preparations. Meanwhile the womenfolk mustered strong, and supported Usa and her troupe. They offered prayers to Sakti, the Mother, for saving Aniruddha for the love of Usä. In the mean- while Krsna was informed. He came with his army, and a straight show- down was enforced. Vaisnavism and Saivism were having a final tussel in the Western frontiers. In this case, unfortunately, Sakti was on Usa's side. Śiva without Sakti was of little use to Bana, who died of battle wounds still merged in his prayers of Siva. Sakti requested Krsna to strike a great memorial to so great a devotee as Bana; and since then the Stone-emblem on which Siva is worshipped is known as Bana's sign; or Bana-Linga (Harivamsa).

(We do not fail to read in this story the skeleton of the Sparta-Troy legend of Hellas. Aniruddha, a Yadava prince crosses ocean and goes to Bana's capital, and falls in love with the princess, as Paris fell in with Helen. This leads to battle, annihilation of the

civilisation of the Princess, who re-crosses the ocean and starts a new civilisation. Helen, as esoteric Power of supernatural preparations could be compared with Bana's supernatural gifts. An immigrant culture started in the Yadava colony of Gurjara sea-coast.)

There is a very strong suggestion in the legend about the eradication of the phallic forms of Saiva rites, and its replacement by symbolic iconic forms. The Vedic Hindu (represented by Krsna-forces) fought out the issues; overcame the occultists, and accommodated them within the Siva- fold of the Siddhanta variety. (Cf. Aurora-Tithonus-Dawn-Apollo.)

VII

The Tripura Legend

The Asuras had offered penance to Brahma. And again they succeed- ed in obtaining from the good god a boon of Three (tri) Cities (Puras), i.e. fortified cities which could only be pierced by one single arrow shot Thus fortified soon the Asuras by a mighty god capable of doing so. humbled the Devas. Indra, then, approached Siva for assistance. Siva, reluctant for a showdown on behalf of the Devas, asked them to accept half his Power, which, he thought, would be sufficient for destroying the enemy. But the Devas were unable to bear even the half of Siva's power. So they changed their plans, and changed the arrangements. All of them, together gave half of their power to Siva; and Siva, thus further streng- thened, defeated the Tripura-Asura. The aerial power of the Tripuras, the iron, gold and silver forts, were laid to dust. All of them together failed to share between them half of Siva's Power; but Siva alone could bear with grace and ease and assimilate half the might of each one of them at the same time. Since then Siva retained the power of the Devas; and was known as Mahadeva.

This legend of Harivamsa (mentioned in Vayu, Agni and Brahma- vaivarta, as well as in the Mahabharata) records the synthesis between the tribal, Tamil and Aryan gods and their tenets.

The Three-Puras (forts) were made of Iron, Silver and Gold." Naturally these were not physical forts. These were the Powers attained through the control of Tamas (Iron), Rajas (Silver) and Sattva (Gold). The non-Devas were led by the Danava (Danu's) progenies.

Let us recall that Danu was Ṛsi Kasyapa's wife and sister of Diti whose sons were the Daityas. Their sister Aditi was Kasyapa's wife too. Her progenies were the Adityas, the Devas. This indicates Kasyapa to be a patriarch in whose great clan sisters had been taken in marriage for propagation of the Kasyapa race. But later on there came about a conflict based on the principles of offering worship, and on the principles of calculating the astronomical facts about the movements of the planets and subtle calcula- tions relating to astronomy, and the influence of astrology on human conduct.

Vilohita was a son of Kasyapa. He was asked about the rotation and revolution of the earth; moreover he was also asked about the basic fact of the movements of the sun and the earth in respect of each other. Which one of them moves, and which one of them does not? Vilohita spoke for the movement of the earth around the sun (without obviously waiting for Galileo or the Papal sanction). But his other son Vikala opposed, and said that facts were otherwise. Thus the two schools of astronomy (in the manner of the Papal Rome on one side and Galileo, Tycho Brahé, Copernicus, Giodarno Bruno, etc. on the other) broke into the two schools of culture, each having its own way of ritual forms and worship. The Vilohitas were to be known as the Taksas, because according to them the Earth was engaged in 'ploughing' (Taks-to plough) the space, and not the Sun. But the Vikalas were known as the Raksas, because they opined that the earth kept still (Raks-to protect, to conserve, to be kept held).

Kasyapa himself was an Asura; so was Indra. The earliest Devas (Aryans) were known as Asuras. (Indra is called an Asura in Rg Veda.)

After the Soma was invented, and on the subject of the use of Soma the people known as the Asuras suffered schismic partitions. Their ways of worship differed. They over-used the drink, and made worship an excuse for orgy. The Dänavas, the Daityas as well as the

Raksasas wor- shipped for gaining personal power. This made Tripura, the Dänava, and the Tripura-people so powerful.

But some of these anti-Devas had taken recourse to the Tantric Saiva ways of the occult Power. Again and again we find that when their spell of Power had to be removed, it could be done by the Saivic way of thinking alone. The Tripuras are clearly a people known to fortifications and armaments. They were expert in missiles; as the various forms of fire throwing machines described in the Puranas indicate. The Devas could vanquish them only after they had accepted the grace of Siva'. Siva himself assisted them. The haughtiness of exclusive power conserved by the privileged could be counteracted and neutralised only through the realisa- tion of the grace of equality and socialism.

This is clearly a legend showing how the Devas had accepted the Siva-way after having been humiliated. The defeat of Tripura is therefore symbolic defeat. It is a defeat of the privileged in favour of the proletariat. Only a single arrow from Śiva's Pinaka had pierced through the three forts. This is an esoteric way of speaking about the final conquest of the Gunas, which have been described as the three Puras, Sattva, Rajas and Tamas; or Svarga, Martya and Pätāla, represented by Gold, Silver and Iron respectively. Like the conquest of Bali by the Dwarf Brähmaṇa Vamana, son of Kasyapa (Vamana has been called a Viṣṇu incarnation), was easily pierced by the single Siva Mantra, when acquired through the powers of the Pinaka (Śakti). The Tantric powers of Siva-Sakti ultimately reinstated the Vedic gods to their positions, after they had sub- mitted to Mahadeva, the Great god of the Vedic gods. The legend of the conquest of Tripura by Siva is a great esoteric legend of the Maheśvaras for whom the Tripurasundari Sakti, or the Tripuresvari Sakti, or Tripura-Bhairavi carries great significance.

VIII

The Khandava Fire

Arjuna was one of the Pandavas the five brothers engaged in a life battle with his cousins, Duryodhana and his ninety-nine brothers. In this battle for success, the sheet anchor was Arjuna, a favourite of Indra and Kṛṣṇa. Duryodhana was a follower of the Tantric practices; and it was clear that without the Siva-people on his sides and without the Siva techniques, success in the battle would become a doubtful enterprise.

Arjuna was thus made to espouse a Naga girl, Ulupi; and Apsara girl, Kumbhinasi; and Bhima his brother was made to marry a Raksasa girl, Hidimba. Arjuna also married another non-Aryan girl from Manipur, Chiträngadā. Moreover he had befriended such Dänavas as Maya; Gandharvas as Citrasena; and a host of the Nägas and the Kirātas whom he had won more by good acts and Tapas than by Tantric forces.

Arjuna had to seek favour of Siva and Agni on two occasions; in fact it was through their favours that Arjuna had become invincible in battles. The first was his encounter with Agni and Indra. This refers to an incident Khandava-Dahana, the burning of the Khandava-forest and offering the entire forest, with all its inmates to the god of fire, Agni. The incident is related in the final episode of the first canto of the epic, Mahabharata. Once

Arjuna and Krsna, after passing a delightful time with wives and friends at a picnic near the Khandava forest on the banks of the Yamuna, were engaged in a private chit chat away from the crowd, when a sickly looking famished Brahmana approached them and asked the favour of a full meal. It was discovered that the Brahmana in question was no other than the god Agni, and a full meal for him would not mean an easy matter. But Agni was suffering from too much food of fat, and needed meat.

The king Svetaki was fond of sacrifices. But the Brahmanas engaged in the sacrifices became tired of staying continually in the heavy smoke and the heat. Then Svetakî asked Mahadeva himself to act as his chief Brāhmaṇa and Hotā (Priest in Chief). Mahadeva declined to do this on grounds of his being opposed to the Vedic Yajñas, which the Brahmanas reserve for them alone; but he helped them out with an able substitute, Durväsä, considered to be the Rudra's son, who helped Svetaki out. That twelve years of

pure Rudra-Yajña left Agni weak with too much butter;67 and he needed a revival of his normal health with a good meal of meat. For this he had decided to consume the entire Khandava forest with all its inmates, the animals. But every time he tried to do this, the Nagas, with the Taksakas as their leader, approached Indra, who was a friend of Takṣakas. Indra would pour rains from the very heavy clouds and the great rains would put out the fire; and Agni's efforts would remain unfulfilled.

Thus Agni sought Arjuna's assistance; as he, Arjuna, as the favoured of both the Taksakas and Indra could perhaps do something to stop Indra from disappointing Agni. (The Indra way was preventing the Tantra Maheśvara way to take over the area of Khandava, near the Yamuna, where the Vedic way was strong.)

Krsna and Arjuna pleaded want of proper weapons, as they had not come prepared in a picnic to undertake such a special task. At once God Agni called to his aid the god Varuna and asked him to provide the young men with proper weapons. Varuna gave Arjuna a bow named Gandiva (Made of the spinal bones of a rhinoceros), a quiver named Akşaya (never to be without arrows), and a special chariot protected with a discus, and a mace named Kaumodaki. (The two secured special powers by accepting the new Agni-rites and propagating it.)

Agni began to consume the forest. The fast chariot of Arjuna driven by Krsna prevented all animals from escaping. They died there. Takṣaka, the great Naga chief, who lived there, was at this time, touring Kurukṣetra; but his family was left behind. His wife, under the stress, attempted to escape with her son. She died in the process, but the son made the escape. Indra angered by this molestation, approached with his army to put out Agni's powerful acts. There was confrontation between Arjuna and Krsna in favour of Agni, and Indra, with all his power to support him. (The clash reached a critical stage.) Of course, the Devas were defeated, and Indra made a compromise. Agni agreed to release the Dänava Maya, Taksaka's son Asvasena and four little fledgl- ings who sought Kṛṣṇa's favour with their parents. Krsna requested Agni to spare the lives of these. But for these

six lives, the vow of the burning of the Khandava had been completed. (The Dänava and Naga way, and the tribal worship of fowls, were allowed to co-exist with the latest Fire-rites.)

IX

Tantra-Empiricism and Occult Legends

a) Asvatthama and the Mahadeva-Sacrifice

The central character of the epic Mahabharata if there be any, is Kina. And the central motive of inspiration in the epic as of Krsna him- self, is the restitution of the real honour of Dharma to Dharma, i.e. restoration of the values of ethical and social equity..

In this struggle some Brahmanas had taken sides. The most import- ant of these Brahmanas were Krpä and Drona, both professors of military science and teachers of the Kauravas. Drona had a son, Advatthämä, who himself was a great warrior, specifically gifted with Tantric powers. He had attained immortality through Tantric-Yoga. Asvatthāmā, Duryodhana, Siśupāla and Kamsa were the stalwarts of the Tantric occult; and all feared Aśvatthämä, who was considered to be immortal unless he himself decided to give up life.

This Asvatthämä took a resolve at the end of the battle to destroy the Pandavas through a night ruse by entering the camps, and indulging in clandestine murders. "If I have to be born," he said, "as insects and vile maggots for this heinous crime, may I suffer; but the cause of Duryo- dhana (was it the victory of the occult against the straight moral path which Krsna followed?) must be upheld."

Asvatthāmā had paid a visit to Duryodhana on the banks of the lake Dvaipayana, where he had been dying of the wounds without anyone to attend on him. He had hid himself in the water to escape Bhima's chase. But Krsna hunted him out, and Bhima had mortally wounded him in a duel. Eventually Krpa and Asvatthämä found him dying alone. The condition of the great Emperor had moved the heart of Asvatthämä, who was the life-long

friend as the son of the Guru and Generalissimo of Emperor Duryodhana. Aśvatthämä took the vow of finishing off the Pandavas by hook or by crook. He offered special prayers before approaching the Pandava camps with the full purpose of destroying them. On his approach, he felt that a great Power was protecting the camp, and he could not counteract it. He tried his skill, and used a number of weapons. But the Great Power, standing in the form of Siva, swallowed up all the weapons. He then tried fiercer methods; and found that despite his attempts the camp remained impenetrable.

Frustrated, he began to offer prayers to Mahadeva. He lighted a great fire, and vowed, "Born of the blood of the great Angira, I, a Brahmana, hereby offer my body to the fire, so that either Maheśvara accept me, or may he assist me in overcoming this difficulty of entering into the Pandava camps tonight." He then entered the fire by walking into it, naked, and covered with oil and fat. Whilst standing in the flame, he kept his folded palms clasped on the head, and continued to pray to Mahadeva.

Mahadeva appeared and assured him of assistance. He said that he did not want to

oppose

Krsna, a great power by himself, and one of his greatest devotees. But, for the night alone, the extra skill and Power that Asvatthäma had sought would be his. He was awarded a special sword, and a special spiritual power, but only to last the night. This is a testimony of the use of the Mäheśvara occult power in a camp where Vedic Dharma and Krsna prevailed.

The Pandavas had been missing from the camp that night, which Asvatthämä did not know. And mistaking the five sons of the Pandavas for their fathers, he chopped off their heads in the dark, whilst they were yet asleep; as he also chopped off the head of the Pandava general Dhṛsta- dyumna, Draupadi's brother, who had killed in battle Asvatthäma's father Drona.

The story itself, narrated in the tenth canto of the Epic, describes a great feast and dance of the daimons, spirits, witches and ghosts all rejoic- ing at the efforts of Asvatthämä, and

reminding of occult rites, or the rites of the Ghoras and Aghoras, Pasupatas and Māheśvaras.

The entire episode is a description of the use of Tantra power for the purpose of securing empirical success.
It should not be much difficult to read in the legend the substitution of the ancient Fire-sacrifice with animal offerings for the Vedic 'all-butter' sacrifices, and the substitution of the later Kṛṣṇa-cult and Agni-cult for the Vedic Deva-sacrifices. The society was changing the forms of its rites. The conflict of sacrifice without meat and with meat was at its height in the area between the Ganges and the Yamuna.

Nāgas and Dänavas became Arjuna's friends; Agni and Varuna received special forms of sacrifice supported by Kṛṣṇa; Arjuna himself was further strengthened by powers derived from the Varuna-people and Agni-people who continued their special powers of skilful chariot- driving and special skills in archery and mace. An entire area along the river Yamuna was cleared of forest, and a colony of fire-worshipping people was settled. From now on, Arjuna would recruit his army from out of these fire-worshipping people known as the Vṛṣṇis and the Pañcalas.

b) Arjuna and the Kirata70

Asked by Yudhisthira, his eldest brother, Arjuna had gone out seeking special trainings in battles from Indra, his guardian deity and spiritual father. As the King of the gods Indra could indeed have given Arjuna special training. But without having pleased Mahadeva through special penance, and without acquiring his Powers, Arjuna would not be able to wield the weapons that Indra could train him in. He was tested with the most alluring of the celestial beauties, Urvasi (Aphrodite) herself. But he remained avowed, and at the risk of being cursed by her, stood his grounds of a celebate's vow.

Having been successful in this first test, now Arjuna retired into a deep forest and started his lonely penance. There came Siva and Uma with their followers, the Ganas, in a garb of

the Kirätas (a forest tribe living on hunted meat) and chased a boar already chased by Arjuna. The arrows of both the Kiräta leader and Arjuna at the same time had struck the boar; and to make the matter worse, an arrow from the Kiräta-girl (Umä in disguise) too had struck the boar. The Kiräta pair laid claim on the boar as their prize; but Arjuna claimed his right as a hunter, as the other two had given chase to a sport already chosen by Arjuna. This was done by unruly barbarians alone in violation of the noble rules of sport'.

The Kirātas claimed the forest to be their domain, and the kill to be legitimately theirs. No Aryan intruder was going to tell them which chase was theirs, and which was not. The feud worsened ending in a fight. As after a long fight Arjuna failed even to scratch the skin of the tall, well- built wild Kiräta; and as again and again the girl giggled in glee at Arjuna's childish attempts, Arjuna clasped the Kirata, by his powerful hands and tried to throttle him. Now the Kiräta began to press Arjuna against his body until he choked. He knew that he had to acquire special Powers. He began to pray to Siva and Umã, as sources of Power. But the garlands he offered to the deities actually reachedthe necksof the pair standing, and still smiling at him. Then Arjuna knew that the heavenly and divine pair, pleased at his penances, had decided to reveal their secrets to him, and teach Arjuna the
secrets, and the mysteries of the special spells that the Siva people knew. What Arjuna was missing by showing off, he secured by submission and humility.

This simply means that Arjuna actually received the special occult and Tantric trainings of the secrets of tribal weaponry, which he would be able to use against his foes who had been well prepared in Tantra. The acceptance of the Pandavas of the worship of Siva of the tribes had had permanent effects on the hitherto secluded and exclusive Vedic forms of which Arjuna, as the spiritual son of Indra, had been a symbol. Those who were masters of Sattva Guna alone could successfully and purposively make use of the Tantra-power. This has been amply described when both Asvatthämä and Arjuna had used the annihilating spell of Brahmasira. Whilst Arjuna's spiteless sublime spell served its purpose of check-mating Aśvatthämä, Asvatthämä's spiteful wrath check-mating Arjuna's spell rebounded on him, and kept him in eternal torture of fire, pain and thirst for the rest of his life without any other power to help him.

(c) Ravana-Legends

(i) Ravana was the king of Lanka, and the conqueror of the world and the Devas. Legends concerning the feats of this figure are informative about the ways in which Saivism had spread. Ravana was the person who had carried Sitä by force from the hermitage where she lived with her royal husband Rama. But his main strength came from offering penance to Siva. (Bali, Kärtaviryarjuna, Parasurama, Hanuman, Dattatreya, Bāna, Kamsa, Duryodhana, Sisupäla, Jarasandha-many others were worshippers of Siva. But all of them did not have the balance of Sattva and Tamas. Real Saivism must be Sättvic.

It is remarkable that the chief Saiva prince of the time, Arjuna, son of Kirtivirya, and king of the state of Mähismati, and Ravana of Lanka were at war. This shows the two ways of Saivism. Ravana was vanquish- ed by Arjuna. Then Arjuna was vanquished by Parasurama, a Tantra- exponent, who had to be subdued by Ränia, son of Dasaratha. The web of the struggle between the Tantric, Mäheśvara and Vaisnava forms of worship has been patterned into an interesting complex in the epic Rāmāyaṇa of Valmiki.

(ii) Ravana's acquired power made him overdo things, as once he had gone to defeat Siva himself; and as his guards warned him off the holygrounds where Siva and Uma had been engaged in the Cosmic trance. Rāvana pulled off the Kailasa peak by the roots. Uma, scared, held on to Siva; so Siva to assure Umã, just put a little pressure of his thumb, and held Ravana fast under a deadly weight. Ravana became paralytically ineffectual. Advised by his council-members he offered a terrible penance to Siva, and obtained a special sword as a boon. (Did Rāvana try to put a stop to the Northern form of Sattvic Saivism of the Siddhantins; and uphold only his Ghora way?)

In the legend of Vedavati, Rāvana, mad of his power, made the mistake of raping Vedavati (the Vedic spiritual power), who was dedicated to the worship of Nārāyaṇa. She cursed Ravana for his attempt to rape her, and warned him that in a later life she

would be born as Nārāyaṇa's consort, and would be the cause of his destruction. Thus Rama, and particularly Sitä, the wife of Rama, became the cause of Ravana's destruction.

Rāvana attempted and succeeded in violating, raping and bringing an end to the Vedas. He established the Uma-Maheśvara rites. Other Saivas did not agree. But in the end he was vanquished, and the true Vedic and Tantra rites were re-established. We could read the under- current of the Vaisnava and Saiva rivalry, and their spread side by side under this or that royal patronage. It appears that this trend had set the pattern for the later
growth of the two faiths during the centuries following Buddhism in the Deccan.

(iii) Then Ravana came to the country Usartija, where a king, Marutta by name, was engaged in a Yajña led by the Tantric sage Samvarta, brother of Brhaspati. As Ravana appeared to disturb this Yajña, all the Devas present at the Yajña sheltered within the guises of 'different animal and bird forms'. Indra became a peacock. Yama became a crow. Varuna became a swan and Kubera became an iguana. (We find herein a reference to the introduction of the zoomorphic deities who substituted the Vedic gods.) It was, significantly, a Maheśvara Yajna, one that Arjuna of Mähismati was wont to perform. King Marutta, so disturbed, prepared to run away; but Samvarta explained to him that a Mäheśvara Yajña, half-done and given up, might lead to total disaster. Then Marutta became ready to offer Rāvana a fight. Samvarta stopped that too, saying that although Marutta had been worshipping the same Siva, Ravana's penance had made him invincible. For the time being Ravana would have to be left alone. Consequently, Marutta left the battlefield. Rāvana misunderstood this to be Marutta's escape from his wrath, and smiled and went
his way. But on Ravana's departure, Marutta reappeared at the Yajña; and the gods too, now safe from Rāvana, re- appeared, and blessed the animal-forms which have since been considered holy. (Under Tantra-pressure Vedic gods and Yajñas had vanished. Although these reappeared later, these could only exist in some changed forms.)

The manner, in which the Rävana legends have been narrated in the Rāmāyaṇa, clearly indicates that Ravana in these legends had been a movement which ran through ages and ages, generations and generations. It could only have been the cultural history of the spread of the different forms of Saivism, and the struggles amongst the peoples for their spread and superiority.

d) Hanuman

The climax of these legends is reached in the legend of Hanuman (the wonder ape-man of the Ramayana) often confused with a monkey, because of his hare-lip, bushy golden skin, and what is supposed to be his tail. Ravana had gone as far South as to have reached the hermitage of sage Kapila, where he was so overcome by the great Sage's powers as to have been totally incapacitated. He offered penance, begged pardon, and returned with a boon fulfilled. Rävana asked the favour of being finally vanquished by him, and die in his hands.

In this way the later theologians had Rāvana, humiliated by the Yajña-Puruşa, Nārāyaṇa, in the form of Kapila, and made the Kapila- way as the final residual way of God-realisation. This way, along with the Yoga-way, has been eulogised in the Gitä; and the present forms of Saivism find acceptance on all hands.

Chapters 35-37 in the Uttarakanda of the Välmiki Rāmāyaṇa deal with the origin of Hanuman in the following way.

Then Ramacandra, the Great, spoke thus to sage Agastya: 'Both Bali and Ravana had been great heroes, undoubtedly, but nothing to compare with Hanuman. Hanuman has been the refuge of such high qualities as valour, dexterity, patience, wisdom, intelligence, morals and sobriety. Hanuman alone had performed such great deeds single- handed as crossing the ocean, interviewing Sitä, bringing solace to her, and building up her courage, humiliating the combined might of Rävaṇa, destroying the city of Lanka etc. I do not know of even gods who could claim loftier fame for similar deeds accomplished single-

handed. It is through his ability and military might alone that I succeeded in conquering Lanka, rescuing Sita, reviving Lakṣmaṇa, and finally, uniting with my kith and kin in Ayodhya."

"What you spoke of the great Hanuman," said Agastya, "is all true. He had been from birth destined to perform great deeds. But he has been under a spell, and did not realise his potential powers until he met you. That was to be. I must refer to his life-story then. Listen. Hanuman was the son of Keśari, king of the Sumeru-mount, by his wife Añjana, who begot her through the seminal powers of the god of the Air, Vayu. Actually Añjana's personal powers gave her such charms as she derived in her, the mystic powers of Vayu, who became her guardian spirit. She received Hanuman in her womb through the grace of this Power. He was born in a lonely spot, in the open, covered all around by forests; and soon after he raised a loud cry for food (Rudra-Crier; Skanda- Crier; Ravana-Crier; here Hanuman also cries aloud after birth), and Añjana had to rush for some suitable fruit. Hanuman, the infant, could not wait. He saw the rising sun, and took it for a luscious red fruit. He jumped to get at it. He would have perished in the process; but Vayu, the Mother's Power, began to blow so cold that the powers of the sun did not affect the infant. It was a newmoon day, and a solar eclipse was in the process. The Sun too knew that the infant had great deeds to do in later life; and did not mind the presumptuous overactings of the child. Such was not the readings of Rahu, the demi-god, who at the ec- lipse was free to swallow the sun as his food. It was his day for swallowing the Sun; and he was doing so. Now he found Hanumän running at the Sun. So he gave Hanuman a chase. Hanuman, finding Rāhu nearer, ran for swallowing him. Rähu was scared, and ran to Indra for shelter, and complaint. Why his food, shared by the divine law, must be claimed by a second Rahu? Indra wanted to have a look at the matter, and mounting on his Airavata, followed Rähu to this field. At once Rähu who was preferred as a better bite than the Sun, was attacked by Hanuman. He looked for Indra's help; and Indra advanced on Airavata. Airavata appeared to Hanuman a more luscious morsel; and he left Rähu alone, and now rushed for Airavata. It was then that Indra aimed his thunder at Hanuman, and broke his chin and disfigured his face giving him a split upper lip. He fell to the grounds

unconscious, which infuriated Vayu, who stopped blowing, and creation came to a standstill. (Ganesa was injured in the same way, and in that legend figured both Airavata and another planet, Saturn.) Diseases of various sorts attacked all lives. Brahma approached Vayu for enquiry. But he noticed the fainted child in the arms of a very sad Vayu, and was attracted by the infant's golden hue. He touched lovingly the child. The great God's divine touch revived him at once." He was thus touched by Vayu, Sun, Thunder, and Brahma, in one life, and was protected by the Mother-power.

Thus the child had the combined blessings from Indra, Surya (the sun), Vayu; and when these three spoke very highly of the child's future, Kubera, Yama and Varuna too blessed the child.

Thus blessed, the powerful child began to tease the sages and their hermitage too often. They knew that unless his powers are kept in check instead of doing good he could do bad. Although he had attained powers early in life, he lacked maturity. They decided to keep him checked. (As was the Sun's power clipped; Agni's power dipped) (q.v.). He would remain unaware of his real Powers until someone equally powerful would appear in his life, to remind him of his potential strength.

This explains why before meeting Rama, even at the battle between Bali and Sugriva, Hanuman could not be of any military assistance to his friend and king Sugriva; and why Hanuman, at once, recognised Rama as his superior in Powers.

There is no doubt that the Vedic knowledge as well as the Tantric knowledge of Hanuman made him a very important and widely respected personality. He was the spiritual descendent of Vayu, and this should indicate that he was taught by his Mother the Tantric practices of breath- control." As one who had Vayu under her control, she herself had been a great Pranayama-Yogini (like Vedavati). When she bore Hanuman all his powers came from the Great Mother, and from the Tantric practices of Pranayama. This Matriarchal trend, which was always the most power- ful trend amongst the non-Devas, the tribes, was a source of anxiety to the Devas and the Rsis. Both the Devas and the sages were thus threatened

by Hanuman's power. In his childhood he had acquired the powers of the Sun and the Indra. He had acquired the Tantric powers of Rahu and Airavata (two significant names in Vajrayana Tantra), and finally his body was proof against all the attacks of the Vajra-yana Tantra. He was thus master of the great Gayatri, the Vedas, the Tantra, the Mother- cult, above all of Pranayama, that skill of all skills, that gives Siddhis like Anima, Laghima and Draghima, all mentioned by Patanjali in the Vibhuti- Pada of Yoga Sûtra. Those acquainted with the Patanjali Yoga, Asta- vakra Samhita and Gheranda Samhitä should know two things: the powers of the Tantra and Pränäyäma, and of the resulting Siddhis (Success, special spiritual Powers that control Time and Space); the effectiveness of re-emerged powers kept subsided for sometime, and suddenly brought to the fore-front with the help of another alter-ego. Hanuman was a born saint, and Brahmacari; and his alter-ego in this case proved to be Rama, himself a supreme Yogi, Näräyana Himself. But Hanuman had always been devoted to the Saivic Tantras, the Nigamas, the Mother-cult, and the spread of the influence of Hanuman amongst the Aryan Hinduism was yet another evidence of synthesis of the Aryan and non-Aryan systems of spiritual practices.

What then of his 'tail'? His description as 'Kapi' and 'Vanara'? What of his furry skin and his fondness of Sindur (HgO)? The readers would expect justifications. None is necessary. I would ask them to refer to no book other than the Rāmāyaṇa of Valmiki, and read this in the light of the habits and practices of the tribal life in Kiskindhya as described by anthropologists. There are the 'elephant' people, the 'monkey' people, the 'buffalo' people, the 'bird' people, the 'rabbit' people, etc. It is not a new feature for snobs to call names when addressing innocent tribals. Ravana laughed and made fun of Hanuman's tribal name, and pulled the end of his hanging end of cloth, calling it a tail, and then fitting him with a longer and a heavier one to have him killed by burning. The great Yogi-Kapi swung an insult to the favour of his cause. He wore the tail thereafter with greater pride, and to the chagrin of Rama's adversaries, because it was through the 'aid' of this 'gifted insult' of an added tail that Hanuman had been able to score the most renowned and momentous of his victories in life, namely, the burning of the palace and city of Lanka, single-handed. He had paid the devil with the same coin. Everafter, whosoever

commemorated Hanuman, and invoked his power, did not for- get to emphasise this tail over which Hanuman took so much pride.

e) The Legend of Varanasi (Kast) and Divodasa

Skanda-Purana (Kasi-Khanda) has a long chapter on the origin of Kast, which was also known as Varanasi because of its northern and southern border streams, which were known as Varuna and Kasi respective- ly. (There is a great controversy about where the Käsi of Hartscandra, the Kafi of Divodăsa, and the Kast-Varanasi of Buddha really are.)

Those of the Yogis who want to find Käsi in all places, explain these names as the nerves within the body, and the City to be the Sahasrara, where the Cosmic Reality as Siva has Its abode. But we have to find out the geographical identity of Kasi, and, if possible, its historical basis. There is a very popular pilgrim-town in North India known as Kali or Varanasi. (It is the most ancient city of the world. This fact cannot be denied.)

King Ayus was a prince of the 'Lunar' race. His son was Ksatra-vyddha. His son was Suhotra. Suhotra's son was Kaia or Kis (Khas?), Kaia, Kil, or Khas is supposed to be the coloniser and planner of Kasi.

We find a little difficulty in accepting this sequence. The time of Kāla, the prince, precedes the time of Agastya. And it was Agastya, according to the Vedas, who had reclaimed most of the eastern parts of North India from the marshes; but it was Bhagiratha who is supposed to have discovered the Ganges for the first time from source to the delta; if so, the Aryan settlement of the whole of North India has been an affair much after Agastya, Hariścandra and certainly after Käsa. Then, where was the Käsi that Prince Kāśa had founded? It could not have been the present city of Varanasi. Why?

The Bhavisya Purana mentions a King Väranära to have been a King of Käsi. Local traditions support this legend. Hariścandra the Solar King of fame had taken his ultimate abode in Käsi, because it was consi- dered to be outside the world (of the Aryans?). It was considered to be entirely possessed of the Bhairava Visvesvara; as such its ways were

Saiva. Thus it was entirely under the influence of Siva, who protects Kali on the tip of his Trisula. (Perhaps the recognised Vedic Varnasrama society did not effectually flourish in this city. Kasi was a nonconformist city.)

Thus there has been a Käsi ruled by Väranära. And there has been a Käsi founded by Kasa, or Kiś, or Khas; in any case it appears to have been outside the pole of the Veda-loving Aryans. We find a modern town in the North West frontier of the subcontinent named Bannu, known in the ancient time as Barṇā, or Värānas, or Burnus as one would like to spell; but phonetically, we find a city of the same name, and away from the western bank of the Sindhu, which was not included strictly speaking within the Arya-dominated Aryavarta. (In the Välmiki Rāmāyaṇa, Bharata and Sumantra, while ill-speaking Kaikeyf, speak of the strange behaviours of the peoples living to the West of the Sindhu. The state Sindhu has also been condemned in the Mahabharata in connection with the atrocities of King Jayadratha when he was being condemned for his ill-treatment of Draupadi. (Country to the West of the Sindhu was not particularly favoured by the Indo-Aryans.)

Avesta speaks of a city Varend (the name Varend as a city finds mention in Panini) which had been the fourteenth state founded by Ahura-Mazda Thus Käsa is the root of Käsi, and Varanã is the root of Väränasî. We are concerned about the influence of the Saivic trends, that is to say, about the non-Vedic strain in this city. From all these informations one inference becomes irresistible, namely, that the city of Varanasi in those days was noted for anti-Brähmanical, anti-Varnasrama way of life. There is no doubt that it used to be an important Jaina and Buddhist centre; and later it became an important Yavana (Greek) centre also. In the light of these informations the following legend assumes a special character and importance for our study of Saivism.

The Yadu King Bhadrasenya had occupied Varanasi, the present town in Uttara Pradeśa. (This town might have been founded by the Siva people in memory of Siva, and the Siva-lores as had been current in the Western cities above mentioned. In any case the city is

very ancient, and has not changed its site eversince the King Divodasa I who fought with the Haihayas.)

The Royal Sage Divodasa was ruling in Varanasi when Siva with Uma had been abiding his time in the Himalayas as a guest of his father-in-law. By his ways Siva had annoyed Uma's mother Menaka. She actually insulted Śiva. Uma at once took offence and asked Siva to leave the Himalayas for some other place. (Uma-Maheśvara way of Tantra did not perhaps find approval in the Tibetan-Himalayan regions.) Uma was a dark goddess, Uma meaning darkness; but the Himalayan Goddess was Gauri, the White Goddess. Similarly we have a Nila Sarasvati (Blue-water-Goddess) and Sveta Sarasvati (White-water-Goddess). A conflict between the two ways is quite probable.

Siva's favourite choice after the Himalayas was the city of Kali or Varanasi where ruled Divodāsa II, who had been a staunch Vaisnava, and would permit no Saivic nonsense there.

But Siva could not have gone there unless the place was fit for him. He, therefore, sent an advanced guard in the person of his personal guard Nikumbha-Kşemaka. He appeared to a barber named Mañkana in a dream, and advised him to propagate the worship of Siva-
linga with Ganesvara as a Guard. Nikumbha's advice was taken, and the Lingam with Gaṇeśa was deified and consecrated. Since Pratardana had no son, and since the worship of the Lingam was known to be effective in conferring the child-gift, the queen had started to visit the temple, a fact which could not have been kept unknown to the Vaisnava King. His anger knew no bounds. He ordered the uprooting of the Lingam and the complete destruction of the temple. (We see here Vasistha's anger repeated; Bhrgu's anger re-enacted.)

Soon the citizens of Käsi started to move out of the city of so intolerant a King. The city became deserted, and the King regretted, his act specially because there was the danger of an attack from the Saiva Haihayas. A king of the Yadavas, Bitahavya by name, had already attacked Varanasi. Although Divodăsa had, for the time being, defeated him, but how long? Attacks would be made again and again. The people must return. Pratardana,

son of Divodäsa had given chase to Bitahavya, who out of fear entered a Bhrgu-Asrama, where the Rşi initiated him at once in the Brāhmaṇa class. Soon Pratardana appeared and
enquired if the Asrama had any inmates other than the Brahmanas. Of course, Bhrgu, who was already prepared, answered in the negative, having already initiated Bitahavya as a Brahmana. Divodasa was now advised by Pratardana, who had seen Bhrgu confer the Brähmanic order to the non-Brahmanas, to change his attitude to Saivic rites. The Bhrgus had started to confer the highest classification of the social order to any and everybody whenever the person deserved. It was time Divodāsa moved with the times. Under the circumstances it would be unfair, and inadvisable to hold on to an obstinate religious bigotry. Divodāsa ordered the introduction of Siva worship in Varanasi,

It is not difficult to read in this legend the opposition to Śiva worship by the caste Hindus, and the introduction of Siva worship by a member of the lower castes such as a barber. Divodäsa, of course, agreed to introduce Śiva worship provided the worship was done by the caste Brahmanas. We also note that the Saivic rites observed in Vārāṇast clung originally to the Uma-Maheśvara cult, which had the support of the Haihayas of Mahiṣmati (Khajuraho); we note the king's disgust was provoked by the rites practised by this cult, which brought the insulting remarks from Menaka ("Your husband Maheśvara in his habits is quite ignorant of the mannerly and decorous forms. Such habits would not fit in with our ways at all. He plays with any and everybody; even with poor and the outcaste. You who are sinless, you too are engaged in games with this dirty person day and night, non-stop"). Varanasi has Viśveśvara as the Bhairava, and Viśäläksi as the Bhairavi; and has since
been one of the greatest sacred spots for the Tantric Aghoris, Mäheśvaras, Käpälikas, Bauddhas, Vaisnavas, and above all the Saivas. Here too we note the synthesis. Those Samkaracarya followers who prefer a practice of the Tantra-Sakti Yoga as depicted in Samkarācārya's hymn Ananda Lahari consider Käsi as one of their chief centres.

X

Popularity of Śiva and the Outcastes

a) Siva and Minäksi

One day Siva was explaining scriptures to Parvati. Relaxed and play- ful, she dozed off, thereby insinuating that Siva's explanations were neither interesting, nor important. The marital relations between the two were always hazardous. Siva objected; but Parvati insisted that the old man was only a quarrelsome egotist. What he insinuated to be sleep, was only intense thinking. Siva's anger at the Lady's pranks was aroused. Tired of her fishy ruses, Siva sent her down as a daughter of the fisher-folk. She, He thought, deserved a lesson. But it appeared that the judge had to bear the penalty more. While the lady passed her mortal days in delightful activity, separation from her caused great pangs to Śiva. But He could not just go, and claim the girl. Propriety is inviolable. So he sent Nandi for finding out some cause for his successful intervention. The beautiful Minäkşi was a proud possession of the fishing community. Only a person with the highest qualification could claim her. Nandi meanwhile eager to do his duty disguised himself as a shark, and played havoc with the fishing community. They found no fish, and their nets were all torn. The ravages of the shark proved too much. Then came their declaration of the prized hand of Minaksi in exchange of the destruc- tion of the Shark. Now came the chance of Siva, and he came as a young- man, stopped the shark, and claimed the fisher-girl's hand.

The fishy legend brings to the forefront how a cult current amongst tribal fishermen, and a Mother Cult, had gradually been adopted by the Vedic Hindus, and how the Agamic Saivism synthesised with the Vedic Rudra. It also shows the prominence the females enjoyed amongst the southern coastal proletariats in their religious pursuits.

b) The most important document in favour of the point that Siva's popular acceptance depends largely on the outcastes, and not on the Brāhmaṇical tradition, is recorded in the Siva-Ratri-Katha itself, where a 'fowler' has been responsible for a big showdown between

the Rudra forces and Yama-forces, the former winning over the latter with the sagacious consent of Brahma. (See full legend in Glossary.)

c) The Kāmākṣi temple of Assam, and along with that a number of Tantra-temples and sanctuaries like Viśālākṣi, Vasuli, Mäher, Candra- näth, Pakṣitirtham and many more temples and sanctuaries all over India, owe reputedly their special powers from Bhairavi's drawn out of the outcastes.

d) In most of the Subrahmanyam temples of the South of India where the Kālāmukhas, Māheśvaras and Pasupatas jostle together, where the Nätha Siddhas are adored, all kinds of outcastes are not only adored, but in certain Tantric rites, without their cooperation the Laya-Karma or the 5M-Sadhanâs cannot be even performed.

XI-A

Agni

Both the Vedic and Pauranic sources point out that the sacrificial fire which the Hindus today worship, and treat as the 'mouth of the gods', had to undergo many changes, some of which are of great importance and significance for our studies. If we cared to connect the Saivic trends with the certain traits of worship which could not strictly be called as of exclusive Indian origin, i.e., related to the peninsular mainland, we have to study the progress of the worship of Fire, Agni that is.

The Iranian origin of certain Agni-rites has been indicated by the rivalries and clashes between Indra and Agni; and in these cases, of Agni's misconduct, of which we have referred to in the Skanda-legends. Agni has always been referred to in the Puranas as excessively fond of the women generally, but of virgins in particular. At the city of Mähismati his only 'tending-attendants and priests' were the princesses (compare the Eleusian rites, the Greek-virgins, and the Vestal Virgins of the Romans, the Pythagoreans and the legend of Colchis sacrificing Iphegenia). Agni has been noted to have fallen under the spell of the wives of the seven Rsis; he consummated all of them; and yet was too

small to touch the great Arundhati (q.v.). This led him to repentance and grief, and a self imposed exclusion from the Aryan world altogether. Then Agni was married to Svähä, the dauther of Ṛṣi Angira; from whom he had several sons, who actually spread the Fire-cult amongst the cultured people of the different lands.

There is another legend of Agni's being lost to the Aryan world. This is in the Mahabharata. The Devas, led by Agni's grandson Niyata had been searching for him; and he had hidden himself in the waters. He had got sick of consuming fat and butter alone. He, perhaps, was looking for other types of food. He got impressed by the rites and penances of the great spiritual leader Angirasa-Atharvan, who by his penance (by his special rites) had put Agni to shame. The Deva butter-rites were put to pale insignificance by the thumping popularity of Angirasa-Atharvan rites invoked by Mätariusan. Indra, the leader of the Devas had to restore Agni's rights, and with his, the Deva rights. He was helped by Agni's son Niyata, and Agni was rescued from his self-imposed hiding away in the ocean. This time Agni was re-established in a number of forms, only after accepting Angirasa-Atharvan as of the same family. The five Agnis, so accepted, were known to be Kasyapa, Vasistha, Pranaka, Cyavana and Trivarca. These, together, were known as Pañcajanya Agni, a type that was current 'Beyond the ocean where Agni had hidden himself'. We know that Pañcajana was an Asura of the seas, and Krsna would conquer him, and wrench from him his 'Conch', later known as the Pañcajanya Conch. As he did with the other Asurian excesses, Krsna had put a stop to this type of alien and non-Vedic Asura-Agni rites also.

This also indicates, as has been always the way of all of Krsna's victories over the Asuras, that Krsna led the Päñcajana way of fire-cult into the Hindu way by introducing the necessary reforms.

The new way of Pañcajana introduced what later was known as Dakṣina-Agni, a form of Fire-rites specially held for the householders. At this rite, and for this rite, a special hymn known as Vṛhat Sama, or the Rathântara Hymn was introduced. Another aspect introduced was known as the Vinayakas. There were 15 Vinayakas in all. They were

grouped into three sections, five in each. These were really evil-doers, disturbers of the Vedic sacrifices, and stealers of food collected for offer- ing (Viśvamitra sought Rama's aid for the protection of the Vedic Yajñas from these Vinayaka people, and their anti-Vedic forms). They were grouped into three sections, five in each. This was stopped only when a special share had been reserved for them even before the sacrifice proper had

started. The similarities of the arrangements with the exception of Rudra's share by Dakṣa makes us believe that the later synthesis did not really take place as smoothly as we today would like to think." The second misconduct of Agni came about when he became jealous

of the powers of the
penance of Atharvan-Angirä, and tried to hide away from him in the ocean. Inclusive of the previous attempt to hide, Agni thus had attempted to hide twice, once in a wilderness, and again in the ocean. Both the time he had been rescued at the cost of making some accommodation. The original Vedic Agni had to undergo changes, and what was only a pit-contained fireplace become a mobile ritual of Fire, and the Fire for propagation of race, the Fire for the household, the Fire for the worship and the Fire for cremation had to be specifically described and honoured. This, again, reminds of the two definite trends, through which, like the aspects of Rudra and Siva, Agni too had to change from a fierce to a pleasant aspect; and the Aryans had to accommodate. The legend of Skanda, and inclusion of the paternity of Agni, along with the paternity of Siva, has to be borne in mind. Indra had given Prana, and Agni had given Bija to Skanda, the Fiery Howler. This, in short, is the impact of the Skanda-legend on our subject of metamorphosis of the Fire-cult in Hindu rites.

In the new form the most controversial form was that of Kranyad. He, as some other forms, with their fierce aspects, was fond of flesh offerings. He is still noticed in the celebration of the burning of the bonfire (all over the ancient civilisations), and amongst the Hindus as Holika, the spring-time Fire-festival (cf., the cult of Adonis, and the mystic ob- servance of Easter). Kravyad is a three-legged, seven-armed, flesh-eating red man,

with two red faces wearing red garments and happily displaying a garland of fruits (cf., Pan with his fondness for the goats, and of goat meat).

Another legend says that on the subject of humiliating an Asura, Agni had interfered with Bhrgu, the great sage, and brought upon him a terrible curse. The interfering god had to depend for the rest of his life having to eat whatever anyone would be pleased to throw into the fire, good or bad, fowl or fair. Agni protested, and Brahma came to the rescue. Agni's form became defined. He would receive the gifts offered to the gods by his mouth, but he would consume the dead bodies through the fire passed through his bottom. At the
end we observe the reluctance with which the ancients had accommodated cremation as

a
form of fire- offering. When Agni protested and got away from the Devas, Bhrgu sent his messenger Mätarifvän (a Zend Avesta Deity) to fetch him; and when he was brought, Bhrgu himself received him with honour, and assured to remain the chief propagator of the new Agni, and make Agni the most sought-after Deva by the Hindu ritualist. By definition Bhrgu means 'Roaster', a Consumer. As Bhrgu was connected with Angirä, he became a rival of them dityas, the original Vedic people and the Vedic gods. The misunderstanding within Visnu and Bhrgu, Brhaspati and Bhrgu, Brhas- pati and Uśanas, or Sukra only substantiates our main claim that the original fire-worship of the Rg Veda had undergone great changes under the impact of a series of cultural immigrations and demands for a cultural synthesis.

We have support from the Vedic sources too.

In about 200 hymns this popular god, so well known to men, and so endearingly brought closer to them, has been sung. His actual form has been variously described in these hymns. Once he has been described as having a fiery head," and again he has been described as having three heads.75 He has seven (alternately three) tongues, 75A and a thousand eyes,70 and a thousand horns."7 Often he has been identified as a bull difficult to be controlled;" at another place he is a fiery horses who has a fiery tail from which sparks come out (cf., Pegassus of Homer). In- spired by sacrificers he leaps up to the heavens and exhibits his very high spirit, and reaches for his goal. But the most intriguing

form mentioned about Agni is that of an osprey, or sea-eagle, a red-plumed egret often hunted for its gorgeous plumes. We find here the familiar figure of Skanda fond of the peacocks, and of fowls in general. We also remember with great interest that Svähä, in meeting Agni clandestinely and getting away from him, had to adopt the disguise of a sea-hawk, or of an osprey, or Utkrosa (osprey). (Let us recall the popularity of bird-deities of Egypt and Sumerian culture.) The swan too supplies him with a form; and this could be due to his being described again and again in connection with water. He has been described as serpent, gold85, sun,86 chariot,87 and has been figured as one carrying piles of gold from the humans to gods. But the comparison which compromises our attention the most is given with a double-edged axes which invariably draws our attention to (a) Parasurama of the Bhrgus; and (b) the Hittites of the double-axe insignia. The bull, the goat and the Ram have been very popular deities amongst these people, and Agni and the Ram (Chagastha) are inseparably united in the Hindu traditions. Recall in this connection the famous Yogf-figure of Mohenjo-daro which is explained away as a Palupati figure, but is also disowned by many a scholar? Could we call it an Agni-figure? (cf., goat motif and Daksa-Prajapati, Agni, Pan, Sumerian deity and Mesa-rasi.)

He was born of a dead father and mother, and after being born, he was ready to eat up his own father." This, of course, is a reference to the extraction of fire from the two blocks of wooden pieces with a king pin fixed between them for drilling the fire. This is known as the set of Arani.90 It has also been suggested that the sky and the earth are the blocks, and the atmospheric heat drilled by the virile shafts of the sun produces the forest fire." It is born of water, or the oceans, when the water and the oceans in the Vedas include the atmospheric moisture also. Invocation to the fire-altar by tradition was made three times by the Vedic people, and three times offerings were made; hence, he is famous for eating three times. And finally, the Devas do favour him by sanctioning a drink of Soma with them (although his food at times could be quite undivine). Although Agni has been described as the son of the atmosphere," he is also, and signi- ficantly, described as to have been 'delivered from the wombss of the Asuras'. The gods had divined to enlighten the Aryans; but he was really made to serve the interest of men, generally. He was thus

accommodated amongst men. But Agni has also been honoured as the father of the Devas. He is the Embryo of sacraments." He is eternally young, and he is getting eternally old too. Soon as he gets old, back to his youth he recovered. (Siva himself has been described as the oldest of the gods, and at times looking a most handsome youth). Of course, the reference is to the daily invocation of the fire, which daily dies out, to be re-ignited again. This is the reason why the mystic figures like the Salamander and the Sphinx are reputed to arise from their ashes, and why the sanctity of sacrificial ashes is so popular. But we begin to suspect how far this concept is related with the concept of ceremonial rites of sacrificing a youth (Adonis, Mithra, Atys, Vrsaketu, Sunahsepa). Vrsaketu, son of Karna, significantly known as 'the Bull-flagged one' was demanded to be eaten by Agni after a due sacrifice. Indra had demanded from Karna a blood- sacrifice when he asked for his Kavaca and Kundala (both signs of Tantric safeguards).

Agni has been hailed as the inner-life of the vegetations." He lives within the plants (cf., legend of Pramlocă in the Visnupurana). He favours the forest. He is the 'embryo' of the plant world. If we recall that the Agni which was laid within a pit (recall the Pärvati-Daksa descrip- tion of the Fire-Pit) belonged to one type of Fire rites, as compared to an-other type, where the Fire was placed on a Vedl, or a platform, a raised square mound, we could consistently follow the fact that the Fire rites too, like the Siva rites followed two channels, which indicate the other fact that there were definitely two streams of the Aryan approach to the sacrificial rites and the uses of the Fire. Agni has been called the Navel of the Earth100 because his sacrifices were offered within a pit, which had to be dug inside. (The archaeologists have excavated such raised mound shaped cubic altars to Fire in ancient civilisations of Iran and Babylon) (see plate 32)101, Navi, or naval, is a synonym for a sacrificial pit, or altar. He is called a Vediṣad, a member of the congregation of the Vedi, the raised altar-platform.

The identification of Agni as Surya and vice versa has been a pet Vedic concept. The Sun is inapproachable; and certainly Agni could very well substitute for the Sun on earth for the earthly devotees, as Fire has proved himself to be the greatest friend to mankind. He is

born as the form of the Rising-sun;10s and with the setting sun he again settles for rest within the pit-firelos where he is maintained. The eyes of the worshipper are as much attracted to the flames of the fire as their minds had once been attracted to the glories of a sunrise. The Vedic Sun's unquestioned superiority is here being substituted by the utility and usefulness of Fire.

In relation to the Fire rites, as in case of number seven with the Vedic ones, number three has been considered to be very holy. Before the Athar- van the Vedic knowledge was known as the knowledge of the Trayl. Agni has three heads,106 three tongues, three bodies and three resorts106 (Trisadhastha), which corresponds with the description of Agni as the resort of the three Gunas, 107 Sacrificial Fire has been divided into three different parts,100 and these are quite different from the Garhapatya Agni. 10 Agni has often been identified with Mitra and Varuna,110 Even as we read the Vedas, we find that the occult and the use of Fire rites in the occult, for the removing of evil souls, have not been quite unknown to the ancient Vedic Rsis. The Rakṣahan Agni drives the Räkṣasas away,111 Indra is chiefly relying on Agni for the killing of Asuras.113 Not Indra, but Agni, is invoked oftener for assistance in driving away the evil spirits, specially the Räkṣasas, 113

Amongst the divinities Agni is the only one who never leaves the householder alone. He is generally dear to men, but is fond of girls specially, who chiefly use their mouth-puffs to blow up the flames from smouldering fire, Gärhapatya Agni, who has been termed as Master of the House, Grhapati, has been derived from three types of Agni (Ahavaniya, Gärhapatya and Daksina: sacrificial, house-hold, and crematory fires respectively);114 and the privilege of living near to the human habitations, residential quarters, has been denied to the other two. We find that in this state Agni is being 'carried' from place to place.115 This is remarkable in view of the fact that carrying the Fire-Are from place to place is still the practice in some religious forms. They also consider the Arc as a moving 'womb' of the Power of the Divine. Under Saivism, of course, we have noted, that Siva,

the anti-fire, and Śiva, the pro-fire, actually develop into two different branches; and the Fire-minded Tantric-Saivic rites have a number of forms.

Since men welcome Agni at home, he is the Chief-guest for the householder. Thus Agni has been called a brother, a family-member, 117 a clan-blood. So intimate has this God been to men, that of all the gods it is he who craved for the females of the human world.11 Thus evolved the great Agni-rites as offered by Bharata, Bardhyafua,1 Devaváta,11 Divodasal and Tratadasyu,13 each of whom introduced a novel Agni rite.

This kind of interrelation of an intimate nature between gods and men could never have been practicable except through the Grace of our God Agni (Apam-Napat), whom the Hindus love in every respect, and in whom the Hindus have merged different and differing trends which had immigrated to the land of peaceful co-existence.

Fire and priestism are correlated. The two could not be separated. Once Agni, tired of serving in the Yajñas, tried to retire (recall the legends of (i) Marutta and the Khandava,124 and (ii) of Niyata-Atharvan and Matarifvän); but the Devas after sometime approached Agni and re- quested him not to refuse the humans the pleasure of having him amongst them. So he remained as their Purohita, or priest. To be the chief priest is the greatest and the special honour of Agni.125

Thus he is the carrier of the offerings that men make to the gods, but in the human circumstances that alone could not have been the role of Agni. He has to consume many other evil things; in fact ever- since Fire has been put to the use of men, Fire has remained the most overworked scavenger of the dirty human world. He has to cremate the bodies offered formally to his flames; as well as the various types of sacrificial flesh offered to him. These different roles of Agni alone caused so many mythological legends to be written. He was the carrier of the offerings of the gods: Havyavahana and the carrier of the offerings to the Menes, or Pitrs, Kavyavahana; and a close associate of the Raksasas for their occult practices, for which he was called Saha-Raksasas. The fact seems to be that at different times, and at different ages, as situations forced, the circumstances obtaining at

the time had to bend back, and make room for the changes. These changes called for corresponding changes around the cult of Fire; because besides the Sun, Agni alone appears to be the only binding force between the differing groups of the entire Aryan community, and even the non-Aryan world. Thus the changes introduced around the rites of fire had to be accepted by the Mother-community, with, of course, certain reservations like, classifying the uses of fire into Havya-Vahana, Kavya-Vahana and Saha-Raksasas.

The closeness of some fire-cults with some Siva cults makes compari- son irresistible, and we could imagine that, although for Siva, and for the propagation of Saivism, no sustained Vedic records are available, it is not impossible to read between lines, and study the gradual growth and popularity of Agni as recorded in the Vedas, of which the Epics and the Puranas are just some mystically stated versions. This is the reason why that particular cult, the Skanda cult, is so significant to the stu- dents of Saivism. In that cult the streams of Agni, Sakti, Siva and Veda (Indra) merge through the intervention of the mystic godhead Brahma, the conscience-keeper of the Aryan culture at times of dire crisis.
Agni becomes a Chief-Guest, a member of the audience, a witness, I and Angirasa-Atharvan becomes his first agent. He knows the sacraments the best; and he knows the rites: 128 As Agni's representative he authori- tatively corrects those failings in the performance of forms, which the Devas, unused to those rites, often falter in. In consequence they often cause confusion. He became Kavi, Kavikratu and Jatavedas.130 As a spiritual power of the Asuras, Agni knows the rites, which could cast spells. These Krtyäs are known as Angirasa-Atharvan. His great and fierce Krtyäs make the universe shake. Thus he is often addressed as Vṛtrahan, and even Purandara [Breaker of the Fort(e)s.]131

Agni is an Indo-European word. In Latin it is Ignis and in Slavic it is Ogni. The adoration of Fire has been the chief distinguishing charac- teristic of the Aryans; and there has not yet been any people who have not been influenced by the Aryan cultures, and any religion, people, or any religion which has not been influenced by the Aryan culture. The later non-Aryan religions are only protestant schism-growths of a Mother-Family

gradually developing as world religions. As such no religion has ever succeeded to get itself completely torn away from the sublime attraction of the magic of the flames. Agni has been accepted not only as life preserver, but it has been honoured also as a preserver of that subtle spirit which carries mind even beyond life, and makes it wonder for something not quite defined, but without which the faculty of appreciation of the most subtle features of life remains incomplete and unsubstantial. The practice of offering homage to Fire was current in Iran, Judea and the entire western world that fell within the dominance of the Greeks and the Romans. The ancient cultures of Sumeria, Crete, Babylon and the Hittites had had their own respective forms of Fire cults. By studiously avoiding the adoration of Fire the Buddhists have only emphasised how much, and how deeply did they shun even to breathe the name of Fire in their rites, because their chief struggle was against the dominance of priests and the priestly rites over the householders. They kept away from Fire, Cult, Brähmanism and priests.

Yet the lamp burns like a peaceful virgin at the foot of a Buddhist pagoda.

XI-B

Agni and Atharvan (Angirasa)

We have noted in the course of our studies the close association bet- ween the Saiva tenets and forms, and the Atharvan-Angirasa form of sacrifice which had been different from the Rg Vedic Yajñas. The occult and Tantric forms are quite prominent in the Atharvan Angirasa forms. We have also seen how Atharvan-Angirasa has been called 'the One who of the Agnis is the First'. We have noted this as an evidence of the two trends of cultures having been contained in the Tantras and the Saivic development in Hinduism. The immigrant cultures brought new forms, and in these forms Atharvan forms had played a great role.

In the Mahabharata (III-222:Märkandeya Samasya episode) we find this supported.

Agni had become an underground force after fire being used as a means of disposing of the dead in the name of Bharata, alias Niyata. Lest again the Devas call Agni for divine

uses and Niyata-Agni got mixed up with the original Vedic Agni, Saha, the first Agni, hid himself within the 'waters. (Rg Vedic sacrifices had left the land of Atharvan, and went elsewhere.) The Devas got scattered; and started a search for the 'lost' Agni. At last they met Atharvan, and requested him to reinstate the old powers of Agni as the mouth of the Devas. Unless the Deva-foods (Hariya) were prepared and offered the (Vedic) fires were dying out.

Having appointed Atharvan to carry on the task, Agni hid himself gone; and within the waters; but the Fish-people knew where Agni had gave him out. (Were these the later-Sarasvata Brahmanas of Konkan? See later legends on 'fish':) Atharvan found it very difficult to reinstate the former glories of Agni as the chief of the Devas; and ultimately Agni had to give up his role.134

Gradually, through Atharvan, the powers of Agni were utilised in deve- loping metallurgy. The various forms of metals and their alloys were found out, used and utilised for the development of civilisation. This was possible with the assistance and co-operation of the descendents of Atri, Blirgu and Angira. From this time the Devas recognised Angirasa Atharvan as worthy of adoration.

A new world came into being after Atharvan took over, and crossed the ocean (churned the ocean). He crossed and recrossed the oceanic lands and colonised the land washed by the rivers Sindhu, Pañcanada, Devika, Sarasvati, Ganga, Satakumbhä, Sarayů, Gandaki, Carmanvati, Mahi, Medhya, Medhätithi, Tamravati, Vetravati, Kausiki, Tamasa, Narbada, Godavari, Venä, Upavenä, Bhima, Badavá, Bharati, Supra- yoga, Kävery, Murmura, Tungavenä, Kranavenä, Kapilä and Sonabhadra. The land so washed is, of course, Bharatavarsa, and the culture is Hindu culture, 188

Many kinds of Fires were worshipped for various functions and various duties; but the number of the adored Fires were the same as the number of what had once been called the Soma-Sacrifices. All these (new) Fires were lit by the progenies of Atri.

The evolution of a new form of Fire worship has been not only recorded thus in the Mahabharata, but also in those texts which record the day-to- day rites of the Hindus known, such as the Srauta Sutras, Grhya Sutras and, lastly, Dharma Sutras. The evolutionary trend is clearly noticeable.

XII

The Sarasvati-Legends

a) Sapta-Sarasvata Tirthat136

There is a legend of the seven Sarasvati rivers in the Mahabharata. At Pushkar (near modern Ajmer) Brahma himself was engaged in a Yajna. All the divinities were there, but not the River-Sarasvati. This was pointed out to Brahma. (Sarasvata Brähmaṇas were at first not admitted to the pure Aryan clans.) But later Brahmå did make a special request to Sarasvati, and she came. Her presence fulfilled the Yajña. Then the Rsis of Naimisaranya accepted Sarasvati, and gradually all principal centres accepted her as a great current (of Hindu culture?).

There was one austere and diehard Ṛsi by the name of Mañkanaka. When he saw Sarasvati bathing nude (The girls of the 'new current' used to bathe nude, as many still do in parts of upper Punjab and Kashmir according to local usage, but away from the sights of males), he became excited; and the spilled seeds were preserved by the winds. (He, an Aryan, got mixed up with the new trend, and introduced amongst them the system of Pränäyäma, a breath-control with the seed Mantra.) This influence of Vayu, or Wind, as the Maruts, later developed into full- fledged Saiva forms.

Soon after this, once Mankanaka, by accident, got his hand wounded by a razor-blade grass. Blood began to pour in the form of Havi. He was only too happy, and out of joy began to dance. The gods could not bear it, and asked Siva to control the great Rsi, and prevent him from making an offering of his blood, and dancing, which was putting the world-life into an imbalance.

Šiva appeared before Mañkanaka and asked him the cause of his special joy. Mañkanaka said, "Don't you notice that my blood, accident- ally spilled has been accepted by Agni as offering (Havi)? No more dependence on other havi-s. Gods are enjoying it along with my dance?" That is nothing," said Siva, "watch my thumb,"

Mankanaka watched the strange man, who looked like a Siva-follower, and from whose thumb was dropping, not blood, but grains of ash, the blessed Vibhuti.
He was surprised, and knew the stranger to be Siva, and knelt before him.

The offerings of blood as Havi accompanied by dance was a common practice amongst the Sarasvatas. But the indigenous Saivism could not take it. The Vibhuti-imaged Siva-form was accepted in place of the blood- stained dance-laden prayers.

b) Dalya's Penance

In the 41st chapter of the Canto-IX of the Mahabharata the legend of Ṛṣi Dälvya's penance on the banks of the Sarasvati is mentioned. He wanted an animal sacrifice; and wanted animals from King Dhṛtarăştra. The King mocked at the Ṛṣi and offered him dead cows. The Ṛṣi started a Yajna in which he offered the flesh of the dead cows, but only to destroy the King. The occult power of the Yajña began to work on the King who was about to die. He was advised by oracles to go to Dälvya, and beg his pardon. He was offered living cows for sacrifice. This was done; and the King got well. The different forms of

rituals of the Sarasvata people are clearly indicated here.
(Incidentally it is mentioned that the people who were given to occult did offer cattle-flesh as Havi even as a cursed protest.) c) Visvamitra-Vatisthal But the most interesting legend

about the Sarasvata people and the river Sarasvati
concerns a clash between Vasistha and Viśvämitra, two old guards, who represented the two schools.

On the Eastern banks of Sarasvati was situated the hermitage of Vadis- tha; and that of Visvamitra, on the Western bank.

Siva himself in the name of Sthanu (Firm, rock) had made the banks a pilgrimage of sanctity through his own power of Yoga. This was the place where Skanda was supposed to have been anointed as the chief of the Deva army. (Those who know the Skanda-legend would agree that this only indicates that on the banks of the Sarasvati the Agni-Vayu-Rudra and the Mother streams of religions found a nesting place.)

Visvamitra was penancing here. He suffered from the complex of having acquired more power than Vasistha, whose spiritual power was ever on the increase (Vasistha and Visvamitra represented the two ways of Tantra).

Visvamitra decided to flood Vasistha with the currents of the Saras- vati (i.e., to overwhelm Vasistha with the Sarasvati way of occult) and wash him out completely. He asked the Sarasvati to flood out Vasistha, and bring him near his own hermitage. Sarasvati, too afraid of the bad- tempered Visvamitra, went to Vasistha, and instead of flooding him, invited him to assist her in having him flooded.

Appreciating her predicament Vasistha consoled and reassured Saras- vati, and agreed to be flooded.

This was done. Vasistha was brought to Visvamitra's hermitage. But even as Visvamitra was thinking how to humiliate Vasistha, Saras- vati became desperate, and in her womanly way of settling quarrels amongst versed Rsis just decided to let both of the rivals have a taste of her own powers. She took a long turn, and flooded the place where both were, for that time, situated. The waters of the Eastern bank (Eastern way of rites) flooded the Western bank, so that Vasistha was, of course, brought to Visvamitra's quarters; then the waters of the Western bank (Western way of rites) flooded the Eastern bank. Now the two got mixed up.

In the meanwhile, Vasistha, realising that Sarasvati, by taking the matter into her own hands, was running a great risk to her possible peril, came to her rescue. He openly adored

her with a prayer which amongst other things told her, "Language has four forms: Parā (the spiritually abstract form of knowing without uttering); Paśyanti (spiritually formed, but expressed in seed form); Madhyama (the unspoken and unutterable sense of an idea
which hangs between utterance and understanding); and Vaikhari (the uttered sound form). (All these have been discussed under Kashmir Saivism). Perhaps Vasistha meant that the chants of occult, which Visvamitra was accustomed to mutter, could also be followed in a less explicit and more spiritual way, although never uttered and never heard.

When Visvamitra saw Sarasvati carrying Vasistha back by an up-streaming current (By having brought him to Visvamitra she had fulfilled her task. So Visvamitra could not curse her for non-fulfilment of orders), he grew angry, and cursed her, "You have taken course to a cheap Raksasa ruse. Henceforth live as a Raksasa. Let your waters be regarded as 'blood', so that you become defiled to the Vedic people. Let only Raksasas feel happy to worship by your currents."
(This is a clear indication of the local popularity of cults alien to the Vasistha way, but popular along the banks of the Sarasvati. These people must have been accustomed to 'rivers' of blood in the name of prayers.)

The place was known as 'Anti-current of Vasistha'; but in a year's time the poor river won back its sanctity and acceptance, but only after she had, ultimately, flowed along the Vasistha-way (i.e. by giving up the bloody-rites). Moreover, the Rsis who brought back the Sarasvati from blood-sacrifice and the Raksasa-occults to the Aryan way actually converted the Western-Raksasa ways championed by Visvamitra into the Deva forms. The alien migratory rites of blood and orgy, related to the cult of Aphrodite Venus (Sarasvati-Lady of Waters; Aphrodite Venus) were accommodated within Hindu Mother-cult only after certain reforms.

d) Soma's curse and the Sarasvat

There is also a legend about the Patriarch Daksa. He found fault with Soma for favouring Rohini more than his other 26 'wives' (all the 27 are stellar constellations moving in

relation to the Moon in lunar calendar, a characteristic of the Babylonian culture of the Moon).

He cursed Soma; and he lay dying a slow death by tuberculosis (by throwing 'blood"). But when he was cursed, he had to go to the place where the Sarasvati met the sea, in Gujarat, or Saurastra, where Pra- bhasa-Pattanam was situated (presumably).

This indicates colonisation of Western Aryans along the banks of Sarasvati, their change of ritualistic form, and acceptance of a Siva wor- ship free from blood and women.

But in the Skanda-cult the traits still exist, as in the Uma-Mahetvara cults also. Their freedom from blood and allied forms cannot be said to be yet complete. But Hinduism in general derides these as parts of occult and magic (Parandin-Patvacara).

XIII

Sundry Other Myths and Chronicles

a) The set of 3: Rama-Laksmana-Sita, and Jagannatha-Balarama-Subhadra

Rama and Krsna, both born of human mothers, are considered 'full' incarnations of the Visnu. On them descended the Visnu- power at the maximum. This 'Descension' is the derivative meaning of the descrip- tion Avatara. It is through this supreme honour that the Hindus adore the advent of these two supermen as living Isvara, Bhagavana.

Tradition, therefore, imagines them in the same colour and tint which the Hindus reserve for the Visnu-Mäyä, namely Blue, or the abode Sattva- Guna, viz., Akāśa, Space. Visnu is Space charged with Power. On the Hindu altars Rama is worshipped along with his alter-ego Laksmana and his Sakti, Sitä. We have discussed in a previous chapter the mystery of the three deities worshipped together as One. By worshipping the three forms of Sakti in the three bodies, the Hindu tradition adores the different streams of Sadhana that characterise the Hindu tradition of Yoga, Indra, Visnu, Veda-one after the other carried on the Vedic tradition,140 which found substance in Hindu life in the forms of the

deities of Rama-Lakṣmaṇa and Sitä, together with Mahavira. The Vedic and the tribal streams become synthesised in the Rama-worship, Rama has been called, and meditated upon by saints like Tulasidasa as the Brahman incarnate.

Krsna is popularly worshipped with Rädhä as His alter-ego. His Lhadini (Ecstatic) Sakti. The stem Radh means 'to adore', to worship. Krsna's wedded wife was Rukmini. But if Krana is worshipped with an alter-ego, she is always Rädhä; and if, as in the case of Rama, he is wor- shipped as Three-in-One then, as in the Jagannatha-temple of Puri, he is worshipped in the forms of Krsna (Jagannatha), Balarama and Subhadra (Krana's sister). Again Subhadra is his alter-ego, and not wife. In Sakti Sadhana the alter-ego is chosen for the Power in the person, and the 'consort' need not be a wife in the social sense. Some
insist she cannot be the 'wife'. This clearly debars the idea of sex in Tantic Sadhana.

Balarama, like Laksmana, is considered the Spirit of the Nagas, who had been, as a tribal community, non-Vedic mystic custodians of the Yogic stream. Anger and passion characterised both these Yogic personalities. Krsna, as the incarnation of Visnu bore the Visnu symbol of the Wheel, and Balarama bore the tribal, proletariat symbol of the Plough-share, Längala, which has been noted by Dr. S. K. Chatterji as a symbol of the Siva-followers,141 Laguda, Khattvänga, Súla, Wine, Poison, Drugs, and above all, the White taint make Balarama a prominent Siva-symbol. He is different from Krsna. He is also called Sankarzana, which means 'one who has been brought into'. The legends in the Visnu Purana and the Bhaga- vata Purana inter alia describe that the foetus of Balarama was trans- ferred from one womb to another, from Devaki to Rohini. Taking assistance from the derivative meanings of the two words that make up the names of the mothers it is not at all far-fetched to infer that Balarama, originally Vedic, was really found out from the womb of the followers of the Moon-way (Rohini-the chief alter-ego of the Moon-cult, and the astral way of worship). The legend of hiding a baby, change of mothers, fondlings nursed by other mothers are too many in the myths all over the world, and would always bear only one kind of esoteric implication.

Rama was an incarnation of Visnu, so was Parasurama, a great Tantric Yogi, a follower of the Mother, and one of the most brilliant examples of Yoga in the line of the great Kušika, descendent of the Bhrgus. Yet, it was Rama, an incarnation, who had to humiliate and exile Parasurama at a showdown. This symbolised the reinstatement of the Vedic way of rites and life after these had undergone a thorough degeneration through the false practices of the blood-thirsty Mother cult of the Axe-people (Remem- ber the Elamites and the Hittite Axe cult of the Mother?) now recorded in several Tantras inclusive of the Umä-Maheśvara Tantra, the Tantras of the Aghoras and generally the Vämas. The complete exilement of the last traces of the phallic is symbolised by this legend, and the importance of Dasarathi Rama to the later Hindus is appreciated through this incident.

The incident illustrates an epic-effort for integration and assimilation. Ravana's brother Vibhiṣaṇa, who had wisely accepted the lessons of this synthesis, was allowed to remain as the ruling power over the vanquished; so was Sugriva and Angada. The great Asuras like Bana, Gaya, Kamsa, Sifupala, Jarasandha-all of whom had been devoted to the Tantric Sai- vism, and the cult of the Mother, to the utter disfigurement of the Vedic ethics, were brought to books, but their reformed subjects accepted other kings of the line, who had wisely agreed to follow the reformed way of Vedic ethics, and Hindu synthesis. The victory over the alien cults has also been symbolised by such feats as the killing of the 'Bull' by Balarama, the breaking of the Maheśvara Bow both by Rama and Krsna (Rama in Janaka's court; and Krsna at Kamsa's court, as well as at Rukmini's wedding court).

b) Svaha-Nagnajitt-Agni 14

The forty-fourth chapter of the Ninth Canto of the Devi Purana narrates a legend about the daughter of King Nagnajit, and her fascination for the Fire-cult. She actually desired, according to the legend, to adopt Agni, or the Fire-cult, as her wedded religion.

This simple legend shows that acceptance of the Fire-cult was not so casy a form. It also shows that there had been in evidence a Fire-cult which was quite different from the Vedic fire-sacrifice. The non-Vedic cult was associated with a later Visnu or Krsna cult. The

emergence of this Vasudeva-Radha cult is also evidenced by this legend. The syncretism herein innate has been described through this legend in which Visnu, Laksmi, Brahma, Krsna, Rädhä, Nägnajiti and Agni have been all strung together.

In short, the legend narrates: Laksmi was enamoured of the great beauty of Krsna, and wanted to share the great Krsna's close association. Narayana was easy enough to grant it, for Krsna and Nārāyaṇa were supposed to be the one and the same divine being, Krsna being the incarnated form of Visṇu.

Krsna or the Vasudeva worship had become so popular that the Vedic Yajñas were almost ousted completely. This had caused much worry to the 'deprived' gods, who had been almost abandoned by the Brahmins. Brahma was approached, and he went to Krsna. There arose a great beauty from the concentrated efforts of the two. Her dark beauty held the two divines in spell. Brahmä asked her to be the consort of Agni as his inner power, Dahika Sakti, the power of ignition. From that day none would offer any Havi to Agni directly, but through the medium of Svaha, this dark beauty.

Sodha refused. She wanted to devote herself to Krsna and Krsna alone. No more of the Agni-sacrifices; only the Vasudeva devotion. The clash came to the surface. Vasudeva, or Vedic Agni? What next?

Hence Nagnajiti. She was no other than Laksmi and Svähä in a human form, so says the legend. She co-habited with Agni alone in a secluded spot; and from her came several forms of Agni: Daksinagni (Fire for the South); Garhapatya Agni (Fire for the household work); and Ahavaniya Agni (Fire for offerings of sacrificial materials). Hence-forth all the Fire-offerings began to be made in the name of Svähä.

We see how the original Vedic Fire had to accommodate with the later forms through the human agencies.

c) Tulasi and Sankhacůda 141

The legend of Tulasi and Sankhacuda is a celebrated one, in spite of its very questionable form of rendition, where god himself is made to violate a chaste wife for the fulfilment of some divine end. Although such liberties with ethics and moral codes are not unusual with Greek and Roman gods and their exploits, it is an extremely rare occurrence in the Hindu legends. Of these Sankhacûda's legend, and particularly of the violation of his wife by Visnu is unique. (I have a vague suspicion if the rendition has been influenced by the exploits of Zeus sung by blind Homer.)

But we have nothing to fear, because the violation is not physical. It narrates a cultural phase where violation had to be forced because of ulterior ends in favour of the preservation of the integrity of a cultural form and integration.

Here the conflicts again surround the famed mystique figures of Visnu and Siva, and the Visnu-forms and the Siva-forms as practised by the two differing sets of people.

Tulasi was the spiritual daughter of Dharmadhvaja and Madhavt. In her virginity she went for a long penance with the aim of consorting with none other but Visnu Himself. Visnu, of course, entertained her. Whilst in a certain state of this entertainment the two were surprised by Laksmi herself, who, like the ever vigilant Hera, failed, to keep her spouse on the path of loyalty. Of course, the divine curse hit the corres- pondent, not her spouse. But things went back to square one again; and Tulasi failed again; making the lives of hundreds in the process more difficult. This time Laksmi cursed both of them.

Tulasi was born as the wife of Sankhacuda, the son of Sudama, a Gopa friend of Krsna. Tulasi, reborn, wished for a Lover-god of two hands, instead of the four handed Visnu-form. Hence the arrangement of the marriage of Sankhacûda and Tulasi.

They met each other in a spiritual state, when both had been seeking the other; and as they met they recognised each other. Under divine guidance they wedded themselves. (This is a clear indication of the practice of the Tantric 'Laya-Karma' which preceded the Krsna cult.)

In their previous life both were devotees of Hari. In the present life the same Hari continued to protect them. But Sankhacuda was born as a Danava, and as the disciple of the sage Jaigisavya was a stern Saiva.

Although originally a Hari devotee, as a Danava he was born a Saiva; and he displaced all the Devas from their supremacy. (This is another He was born in Bharata, indication of his anti-Vedic Tantra leanings.) where Saivism was made to be the most dominating form. The Devas, thus scared, went to Brahma for redress; he however could do very little, and went to Siva. Šiva advised a conference with Visnu.

Visnu explained that this Sankhacuda was no other than a great Visnu devotee, who was reborn for spreading the Siva way in India. In him the Visnu as well as the Siva ways worked as great spiritual powers; and it would be sheer folly to meet him without taking recourse to some special ruse. It he has to die, he has to be immortalised.

Sankhacuda was protected by his Visnu-past; his Siva-present; his Nārāyaṇa-armours, and above all by the yogic powers of his wife Tulasi. Without making her fall through seduction it would be impossible to van- quish Sankhacuda, and re-establish the Deva way.

It shows that (1) Sankhacûda's way came from elsewhere to Bharata (India); and (2) his way had ousted the ancient Veda way; (3) his way was further fortified by the Sakti way of his wife; and (4) he was specially protected by the Nārāyaṇa-charm. It is also clear that the Charm, the Jaigisavya-mantras and penances, the Sakti spells, and his Saivic followers all together made his ways so popular in India that he had succeeded to replace the ancient way of the Vedic form.

Visnu armed Siva with a lance and asked him to use it in a fight to kill Sankhacûda, because he was a Dänava bent upon ousting the Vedic way. (The Siva way which is contrary to the Vedas had to be destroyed and then mollified by the Siva-way itself. The legend indicates that there were various Siva-ways, some Vedic and some non-Vedic; and the non-Vedic was removed, or reformed, by the Vedic Siva-forms.) He said that he, in

the disguise of a Brahmin, would beg Sankhacûda for the charmed armour, and deprive him of it; and then would go and violate his wife Tulasi, and cast seed into her womb.

In the Brahmin's disguise he deprived the great warrior of his armour; and in the disguise of Sankhacûda himself Visnu deprived Tulasi of her chastity, thus leaving Sankhacûda at the mercy of the Visnu-lance in Samkara's hand. Sankhacůda died.

In commemoration of this incident Conch became a great symbol of the Visnu rites. [In this connection the reader is requested to go back to the discourse on Agni (q.v.) and find the meaning of Pancajana, and the association of the Pañcajana-Conch with Visnu.]

But Tulasi came to know of the ruse, and cursed Viṣṇu to become a black rock for the cold-blooded deed done; it was something which insen- sitive cold stones alone could have done. Visnu gracefully accepted the curse; and from then on in commemoration of the incident and the curse, Visnu is worshipped in the black stone icons of the Salograma, a special type of black stone found in the river Gandaki, and worshipped as a Viṣnu symbol. But Tulasi was given the privilege of remaining Visnu's favourite which she had sought in her previous life, and fo which she had been cursed by Laksmi. In this way Visṇu solved to keep company with Tulasi without offending Laksmi, or Rädhä.

A very close study of the legend would reveal various important facts of cultural history. In this legend Vaisnavism, Rädhäism, tree-cult, river-cult, mountain-cult and the cult of shell-worship all have been neatly knitted together. This legend has been referred to only as an example of the treasures of such Pauranic legends which retain rich harvest for historians of socio-religious culture.

Interpretation

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SANKHA-Conch; Chida-Crest, or Chief. Chief of the Conch-people, i.e., the conch fishers. The area between the Rann of Cutch and the Persian Gulf is famed for conch fishing. (q.v. Päñcajana in section on Agni.)

TULASI: A small herbal plant, worshipped for its very important medical properties; held in esteem by tree-worshipping indigenous dwellers of the Indian subcontinent.

VIOLATION BY VINU OF TULASI'S CHASTITY: The later Visnu worship- pers had forced themselves into (the post-Parthian spread of Vaisnavism had not all the while been a quiet form as the Vaisnavites would like history to believe, and as the constant Vaisnava and Saiva feuds at political levels would indicate) the earlier Vedic Saiva and Rudra, and Nārāyaṇa forms.

DHARMA DHVAJA: People who practised erecting Dhvajäs (flag-staffs) within and outside temples proudly announcing their stamp of worship (cf., the Garuda or Visnu Dhvaja of Heliodorus). MADHAVI: Spring; Spirit of Love and Eros. Cf., Phalgu, Phalguna, Phalguni, the festival of Phagwa, or Hori (from Holika, Horus) the festival of fire and colours observed in the months of the spring, Phal-guna.

The connection of Viṣnu's forceful entry into the Madhavi-Tulasi cult, which flourished within the temple-forms of worship, and accep- tance into the temple of the Tulasi or plant worship, as well as the cults of Venus-Eros-Aphrodite-Tammuz and Ishtar, i.e., the Phalguni cult in the form of the Phalgu 'utsava' is evidenced by this legend.. PREVIOUS BIRTH: In another Era, in another country, amongst other people. Krsna-cult had adopted the Sankha-cult. Cf., the incident of Krsna's victory over Pañcajana (Harivamia), and the subsequent adoption by the Vaisnavas of the Conch-totem.

MARRIAGE OF SANKHACUDA AND TULASI: Sankhacûda the Dänava was a disciple of Muni Jaigisavya, and he also had the Nārāyaṇa armour (Kavaca) granted by Siva according to the Atharvan charms. This was a Tantric practice. Tulasi represented an innocent tree wor- shipping Vaisnava cult. The two got mixed in a synthesis.

DANAVA: Like the Yaksas, Kinnaras, Daityas and Siddhas were Saivas.

SANKHACUDA: Although a Saiva, had been a Hari-worshipper in the previous life. The Narayaniyas became later enamoured of some Atharvan traits.

SANKHACUDA'S DESTRUCTION: This indicated the final destruction of some non- Vedic Siva way of Tantra charms, and its final supersession by the correct Vaisnava, or Vedic Saivism.

VIOLATION OF TULARI UNDER A DISGUISE BY VISNU: The Vedic form would not have succeeded without a violent break-through, and a later inter- pretation, at a quieter moment, of the Dänava forms of Jaigisavya and Atharvan to be the same, as the Vaisnava and Saiva forms related to the Vedic Indra and Rudra. Cf., the Vaisnava Bow of Parasurama and the Siva bow of Janaka both of which were brought by Rama under control. Cf., also the Tantric Balarama being considered along with Krsna as the two powerful Vaisnava figures. The Sankhardda disguise was Saivism in another form. One (Vedic) form of Saivism, had to win over another form of Saivism (Tantric). The Tantric Väma form called for female participation and physical coitus which the Saiva Tantricism completely avoided and abhorred. The dis- guised coitus, therefore, is clearly representative of the introduction of another form of Tantric rites which was and was not, coitus. Physical coitus was superseded by the new Tantra form which was Indian and Hindu.

Note also the Vämä-Sakti way, and its connections with the Eros, Venus-Aphrodite-Ishtar-Tammuz-Osiris-Isis forms, as indicated by Tulast's parentage in Madhav! (Spring-daughter) and Dharmadhuaja (the flag-staff of Dharma).

Laksmi's discovery of Visnu's dalliance with Tulasi (or Radha's dis- covery of Tulasi's dalliance with Krsna) connotes the Vedic people's dis- covery of the practice of erotic forms under the guise of Vaisnavism (cf., the cult of Sri Vaisnavas). The Vedic purists discovering these heinous malpractices, of course, gave them the necessary chastisement, and reform- ed them into the purest forms of Saiva and Vaisnava practices.

Conch and Salagrama: Adoption of the totems of the conch-peoples and the black-stone-peoples both of whom were known to the Mithraic and Hellenic forms. Mithraic gods were preferably made of black stones. Conch had already been a totem of Tritan and Pan, and represented plenty and drinks. (Conch-people: these could be martime folks.)

d) Vinu as the Horse-God Once Visnu had become angry with Laksmi because of a funny incident. Revanta was a
young man, son of the Sun. He was approach- ing Visnu's palace on the back of a splendid horse. So charming was this horse, whom soon Laksmi recognised as Uccaiśrava, the Horse that had come out of the ocean with her at the time of the churning of the ocean, that she could hardly take her eyes off.

In the meanwhile Visnu asked her the cause for her sudden restlessness.

Twice he asked Laksmi. But, she, absorbed at the beauty of her 'brother- horse' (because of her birth together with him from the same source) failed to reply to Visnu.
This enraged him; and he cursed her for being so horse-minded. 'Go and remain a mare till you are satisfied and give birth to a horse in fulfil- ment of your admiration."
She was shocked, and complained to Brahma for this very unusual behaviour of her husband. Well, Brahma could hardly redress the curse. She had to bear it. "But," argued she, "how do I, a faithful wife and loyal to my husband procreate without his assistance? This shall not be, even if I have to remain separated from him for the rest of the creation."
Brahma pleaded with Visnu; and he agreed to be born as a horse. She was born as the mare Vädava, and found a luscious and secluded valley situated between the Jamuna, Tamasă and Suparna rivers. Visnu, now a horse, searched her out, and lived with her in great eclat. In course of time was born a child. The time of Laksmi's freedom from the curse having arrived, Visṇu asked her to go back to their celestial home.

But how could a Mother leave her new-born behind, unsafe, and go to her home. She began to make scenes. Visnu, always ready for some quick remedy, proposed to hand over the child to a king Harivarma, a descendent of the King Yayati.

The child of Visnu and Laksmi, Ekavira, was thus established as a singular hero and from him started a new line in that valley where Visnu and Laksmi had played as a Horse and a Mare.

That from away, from across the seas, an extraterritorial horse cult had colonised in the valley between the Jamuna and the Pannas rivers, and that the new horse-cult that they had brought with them was absorbed into the rites of Vaisnavism, Saivism and Saktism is evidently clear from this legend.

e) The Rise and Fall of the Haihaya

Dattatreya, the Bhrgu sage, had a great royal disciple in Arjuna, the son of the Haihaya leader Kirtivirya. Years of royal privileges and gifts made the priests both powerful and wealthy. Their cupidity and tyranny had exceeded all limits; and the temples where they ruled unmolested and unrestricted overshadowed the laws of the land and the power of the throne.

This state of affairs actually ruined the economy of the land; and the people groaned under the expensive benedictions of the priests and their gods. Other rulers having come to learn about the moth-eaten splendour of the Haihaya state, began to make inroads, until the great Haihayas stood in the fear of total extinction.

At this stage they appealed to their priests for loan of funds to replenish the treasury, and arrange a firm stand against the enemies for the protection of the poor subjects. The government could not have appealed to a more selfish and dead community than these priests. This kind of behaviour incensed the royalty, the government and the people. Under desperation they made a full attack on the privileged Brahmins, their families, without sparing even the women and the children. The erstwhile powerful Bhrgu women became derelict, and began to roam the land as refugees. But their hardship knew no end.

They, now deprived of the assistance of their men-folk, decided to observe by themselves a penance. They organised a great Yajña, and acted by themselves as 'priests', because the Fire-god at the Haihaya centres was particularly fond of the prayers from women.

One of the female priestesses was pregnant. What with the urge and what with the fierceness of penance she delivered a child prematurely. The womb burst through the thigh, and at the very birth was found matured enough to take command. This was the great Brahmin Auraya (born from thigh). He could not bear the privations of the mothers. He cursed the selfish Haihayas, blinded with their spite for the priests, to be completely blind until they paid homage to the Mothers. This they did; and Aurvya's curse was lifted.

The social and cultural lessons of the legend are too obvious to call for a separate explanation. The Mother-cult was re-established amongst the offering priests who had usurped the rights of the female favourites of the fire-temple.

(Auraya together with Cyanana and Jamadagni was reputed as Bhar- gavas, descendents of Bhrgu. Parasurama was a Bhrgu)

f) Cyavana and Sukany

Then there is the legend of Cyavana and Sukanya. King Saryati belonged to the clan of Vaivasvat. His daughter Sukanya had gone out for a picnic with the royal camp. In the bush she was attracted by a brilliant spot of light emerging out of an ant-hill covered with shrubs. Curiosity killed the cat. The young girl wanted to know what could glow so bright from within an ant-hill. She took a sharp spike and poked the object. Blood began to flow; and aghast she fled from the place.

She had pierced the eyes of a penancing sage by the name of Cyavana. Offended, the sage cursed the king, his followers, and the entire camp followers. They suffered from the not very decent ailment of having their excretory organism not functioning at all. Awe struck the gay camp. Enquiries revealed the facts, and the sage was called, honoured, and the good king became ready to make any atonement at any price. He asked for explanations from the young offender.

She explained that it was sheer curiosity untarnished by any motive for mischief, and that she was sorry; and she herself would pay the price, whatever it was. A bold lady of upright character!

Good! The sage claimed her as his bride. There was no murmur; no turning back. The young maiden was formally wedded to the old sage. The couple left the camp for finding out for themselves a suitable place to live in.

And she lived with the old sage, attending to his comforts in every respect. He was blind, and too old to move about. All his requirements had to be arranged for by her efforts. She worked hard; but never complained. She was convinced that her good deeds would not go in vain.

Alone in the adjacent tank she was bathing that morning. She came out of the water; and was brushing her body. The heavenly twin, Asvins, sons of the Sun-god (in his Horse-form from Saranyu) were passing that way. The unabashed beauty of the surprising girl made them stop, and ask for her favours. They told her who they were, and favouring them would be tantamount to offering celestial homage.

"Not befitting the tradition of the great Sun," said Sukanya, "Gods must not induce mortals to act immorally. True, that my husband is blind and old; true it is I am young. But his love for me and mine for him are both ageless and priceless. Pardon my gods; and protect me from doing a heinous crime, namely, betraying a helpless old man whom I myself had injured grievously."

More than pleased with this noble reply the Advins asked her to prepare herself for the grant of any favour she would like them to show her. "Wish it; and it is yours, young beauty."

What else could she ask for but to have her husband restored with sight and youth. The gods agreed, but laid a condition. Sage Cyavana would regain his sight, and he would become as beautiful and strong as the Asvins after bathing in the tank; but the three of them would enter the tank at once, and at once would they emerge, possessed of identical forms and power, and beauty. Sukanya has to make her choice correctly. If she chose her husband, well and good; if any one of them, then the twin would claim her as theirs.

Sukanya went to her blind old husband, and asked him for advice for the next step. He advised her to take the challenge, and then depend on her inner power and vision, which was in no way less than the heavenly miracle.

As the three went down the water, she fell into a trance, and attained her inner vision. In making her choice, on their emergence, she made no mistake; and the gods were cheerily amused. They wanted the two to live ever after in peace,

But the sage now intervened. The Asvins had done him and Sukanya an immense favour; and in turn the sage wanted to do the gods a favour. "Ask for it, and it is yours."

What would gods ask of the mortals! But the Aśvins were not fully gods, or fully mortals. Their birth from the equestrian source had made them classless amongst the gods, and

when other gods would enjoy the drink of the Soma offered by the Brahmins, they would remain debarred sharing the same, as the gods of a lower order. They wanted the grant of the rights of the Soma. Cyavana said, "So be it! 1, Cyavana, shall institute the latest form of offerings whereby, I, a sage, on my own rights, shall offer thee Soma; and thou shall receive. Let who protest beware. From now I grant Thee the right. Let Saryati arrange a Yajña; and let me offer Soma to the Asvins. Dare not Indra protest!" And the Advins were granted equal status with the Vedic gods.

XIV

The Anti-Deva Feuds

The Puranas are filled with hundreds of confrontations between the forces of the Devas and those of the Anti-Devas. These last could be the Asuras, or the Daityas, or the Dänavas, or the Nagas, Ganas or even the Gandharvas who, in fact, along with the Apsaras were supposed to be nearer the Daivic way of life. But the feuds of the Asuras and the Nagas with the Devas have been mostly prominent. The confrontations have been narrated in a singular method of classification. The Devas have always confronted with the Asuras or Danavas (Daityas); but the Nagas have mostly met with oppositions from the Men, who perhaps denoted the much eulogised Aryans. Many take this to mean the

direct con- frontation of the two ways of life: the Aryan and the non-Aryan ways, emphasising the fact that most of the Asura-Deva feuds meant the con- frontation between one section of the Aryans (the Sun-people) with the other section of the same Aryans (the Fire-people). The latter, as devotees of Agni, were closer to the Saivic rites and the Saivic people.

Thus we also find in various legends open intermarriages between the Aryan kings and sages, Brahmins and Ksatriyas with the Nägas, the Naga-virgins, and the followers of Siva. A special study of these inter- marriages, as well as of these feuds reveals the fact that whilst Brhaspati as the spiritual leader of the Devas always went to Visnu or Brahma for advice, Sukra (otherwise known as Bhargava, Usanas, Kävya, or even direct Bhrgu) invariably approached Siva for special powers. This we have seen in the Arjuna-Kiräta legend, Asvatthäma and the Night War legend, the Tripura and Maya legends.

Through these legends we discover that Siva and his worship had to be established in spite of the Devas; so was the case with the formal worship of a particular kind of Fire-worship. The sacrificial Fire lit on a 'platform', and the sacrificial Fire lit within a 'pit', and some other forms, such as sacrificing in the crematory Fire are indications of the changes of the Fire-forms.

One of the most significant legends in which the feud of the two peoples has been given a distinct prominence is narrated in the Devi Bhagavatam (IV: 10, 11).
It concerns the Dänava Bali, Sukra and Brhaspati, Siva himself and Visnu.

In a fight with Bali the Devas were defeated, and thrown out of their power. But soon there were rumours that the Devas were thinking of acquiring more spiritual Power. Kävya, or Sukra, did not waste time to think; he actually went for a severe penance to acquire special Siva-power. His absence could be a blessing for the Devas, who could take advantage of the Guru's absence and harass the Asuras. So Šukra warned the Asuras to keep quiet for the duration of his penance from any excitement or trouble.

Sukra's warning came for a severe test; because the gods had attacked in full vigour. But the Asuras kept very humble, and refused to be excited in spite of various indignities and humiliations. Since the Asuras had laid down their arms, the powers of the gods could hardly do them any positive harm. So the strategy for the gods was to force them to take up arms. This they rigidly avoided to do.

They went to Kavya's Mother for aid. She overwhelmed the Asuras with inertia and sloth, and they remained quiet, but not Indra, who could not be overwhelmed by charm.
As he attacked, she stood naked before all, and none could advance. Indra did, and in the process killed the mother of Kävya. It was a heinous crime. Kävya, on his return, cursed Indra, "A non-vertebrate worm art thou. Live as a worm henceforth."

He also revived life into his mother. But his penance was disturbed through inflicting the curse. He went for penance again. To disturb him again the beautiful daughter of Indra, Jayanti, was sent to him. But she without disturbing him applied herself devotedly to the service of the great sage. The penance was complete. None had done a harder penance. Šiva blessed him. He had acquired the Siva-power. Now he was approached by the devoted girl who had attended on the penancing Rşi for years and years. The sage wanted to oblige her. At her request he married her, and endowed her with a son.

Time passed. The Asuras misunderstood Sukra's (Kavya's) dalliances with Jayanti. They thought that Sukra had forgotten their plight. They had started a big Yajña. When they were looking for a priest, Brhaspati himself, in the disguise of Sukra, came to the Asuras, who, not knowing the truth, were only too happy to be led by their Guru. The Yajña went on with the false Sukra.

But it was a new Yajña. The usual sacrificial animals were not offered. Brhaspati (in the disguise of Sukra) preached a new code of spiritual rites (much alike the Jaina rulings on sacrifice), and preached the highlights of non-violence etc. This was anti-Veda, and the Asuras were surprised; but dared not contradict or doubt the Guru. (This proves that the Asuras were keen on following the Vedic rites.)

Meanwhile Sukra had returned. As soon as he returned, Brhaspati took to his heels. He reported to the Devas his success. Sukra had again been deprived of his power by making him 'curse' while in temper. (Sukra had cursed the false Brhaspati.) Sukra had brought confusion in the minds of the Asuras by impugning on their brain a new form of sacrifice (Jainism?); and by making Sukra marry the daughter of Indra.

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Western, p. 381.
4. Rg Veda, (i) I: 24, 2; (ii) I: 31, 2.
5. Bhagavatam, IV: 1, 41-42.
6. Rg Veda, I: 54, 10.
7. (i) Kena, III-IV., pp. 31, 69, 637, 701.
(ii) Mahabharata, VIII: 7-22: 1.
8. (a) Rg Veda, (i) I: 52, 13; (ii) I: 102, 8.
(b) (a) Mahabharata, (i) I: 219.
9. Raja, (b) Vedic Culture
(Cultures of India), p. 178.
10. Raja, op. cit., 1: 210.
11. Rg Veda, I: 164, 1: 64.
12. Compare Dr. Frazer, op. cit. (abridged
13. Fire Cult: This is always associated with
priests and magicians; in spite of the fact
that modern religions have taken it over, so
far as Vedism is concerned, it is of little
importance. Tajna.
14. Ibid., p. 210.
15. Ibid., p. 210.
16. Rg Veda, I: 164, 1: 64.
17. Graves, op. cit., 1: 74.
18. Graves, op. cit., 1: 74.
19. Srimad Bhagavatam, VI: 2, 3.
20. Srimad Bhagavatam, VI: 6, 16-17.
21. Bhagavatam, VI: 6, 7, 8.
22. Apte, Practical Sanskrit-English Dictionary, p. 1.
23. [illegible]

Only the priest would get happy over such an evil rite, O evil-minded one! - Bhagavatam, VI: 7, 36.

[illegible] under the large both the forms from [illegible] distinctively [illegible] Tajna. [illegible] animal-figur- ed Gods [illegible] Vedic cults and [illegible] half formed figures [illegible] (like Nara- singha, [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] Vedism and [illegible] mal; although in Vira [illegible] technically used to mean the gross-loaded spirit and consciousness; and in Tantra it is used to mean carnal desires in man'. Pakupati means the

24. In following the Indra- Vrtra showdown as nar- rated here, consult the Bhagavatam, Canto: VI.

25. (1) Padma-Purana: Srapi: VII: 132-39. (Then the Asuras went to- wards the Narmadá for living there). (ii) "The Kädyapas divided them- selves into parties: Devas and Daityas."

26. Harivamia, Ch. 215. (a) Gia (IX: 16) mentions Kratu and Yajna as two different rites. (b) Hindu funeral-rites quote an Atharva Vedic hymn. "Recall the rites performed by you with empirical gains in mind; recall what you did!"

27. See Gana in the Ganapati- section (q.v.).

28. Cf., Disaster brought about by Samson at the sacrifice arranged by the Philistines for their God Dragon. The seven brands of the hair contained in that Legend is comparable to the uprooting of Siva's 'jata' (locks) which produced the destruc- tive agent Vira-Bhadra.

29. In following the Indra- Vrtra showdown Lord of the baser instincts, who aids in removing them. (Hara) V-to remove.

30. The number varies in differ- ent Puranas; cf., Deat Bhagavatam. VII: 30.

31. Zimmer, Heinrich. Art of Indian Asia, p. 284

32.Rg Veda, X: 129.

33. Cupid, Son of Venus, (Aphrodite) was also born in water.

34. Crone (a) Graves.Greek Myths, 6. (b) Crocus. Ibid., 7: passim. (c) Horus of Egypt was worshipped as a falcon.

35. Graves, op. cit., 41. passim-6. cf. Seven daughters of Atlas by Pleione.

49. Karapatri Svämi Hari- harananda Ganapati Rahasya, "Bhaga vat Tattva".

50. Re Veda, 11: 31: 1.

51. Mahabharata 1: 1: 77.

52. Prapancasara Tantra.

53. (i) गणेशातद पंच देविाभ्यो नरि्: -Ritual Mantra.

(11) 'देवीं रुद्रच केशवं आतदत्यं गणनायकंच Ganeša, Sun, Sakti, Siva and Visnu.

54. Rg Veda, 11: 31: 1.

55. Danielou, A. op. cit., p. 291

56. Ibid.

57. Cf. Decapitation of Daksa's head, and substituted by a goat's head.

58. Ganapati Upanisad, II

59. Katha Up., I: 2:20.

60. Danielou. op cit., pp. 292-3.

61. (a) Maitrayant Samhita (b) Yajnavalkya

36. Padma Purana, Srati,: 20: 1-7.

37. Venkataraghavan. "Skanda Cult in South India", (Cult Hert. Ind., RIC)-IV.

38. Allegro, J. op. cit., p. 72.

39. Ibid., pp. 72-73.

40. Venkataraghavan, op cit.

41. (a) Sarkar, Dr. S. S. Race and Movements in India (Cult, Hert. Ind., RIC) 1: NR 17-27.

(b) Buxton, L. H. D. The Peoples of Asia, Smrti
(c) Parasara Tantra.
42. Rajaram, Dr. Devahara, 223-232.
43. Deccan College Post Graduate Research
44. (a) Mac Donnell. Journal of Asiatic Inst. (Poona, 1946). Cultural His- tory from
Society, XXVI:
12-22.
45. (a) Padma Purana-Srapi: VII 132-39.
(b) Harisamia, Ch. 215.
46. Gita, IX: 16.
46A. Varuki-Vasus were plane- tary forces and circumcision. that ultimately materialise the underground 64. Agni protects his worship-pers in wealth of the earth, such as the metals, the special built hundred- walled metal forts. jewels, the precious stones, etc. (The 'Oil' Rg Veda, (a) VII: 3:7. (b) VII: 16: 7. we derive from the earth's hidden regions, 65. Ahavaniya-Fire.
the bitumen pitch, etc., too could now be गार्मपत्यादार्वनीयं ज्वनन्रिुद्धरि् तपिा ।
referred to this Vasu-power.) Planets are ऐशो अतगननाना याद्दतछिन पिुणो गर्म पत्यि: what
they are because of their magnetic पौत्रार्वनीयर् ।।
reserves of materials that form the basic -Atvalayana Gr. Satra. One of the three
core of their 'body'. Nickel for example is a fires: it is the consecrated fire borrow- ed
basic core of earth's body. It is mate- rial; it from the householder's perpetual fire. The
is physical; it is all 'earth-earthy'. Hence the house- holder's fire offerings are burnt.
Vasus, like the Grahas are distinct from, Daksinägni, or अन्वार्ायं पचनातगनि:
and deprived of the spiritual powers of Fire on which the food for the Pitys
Sattva. They are not Devas. King Santanu's (Menes) is cooked and lit at the southern
marriage with an unknown girl 'Ganga' end:
(Mahabharata) resulted in the abandon- तपिृणृां र्ातसक श्राद्ंधं अन्वार्ायम
ment of the Vasus, except only one, : -Manu., IV: 123. Bhisma. Thus, 7/8th of the Vasu-
power was गार्मपत्य अतगन:-
abandoned by the culture of the Ganges; only Household fire which the
1/8th re- mained to be sublimated by Krsna. maintains from the son, and from the father.
This power, a spe- cial Yogic Power, the -Manu, 231.
'Ser- pent-Power', was known as Vasuki. 66. Mahabharata, 1: 2: 22-25.
Students of Yantra and Tantra-Mandalas 67. Rg Veda, X: 61.

know that several types of 'Ser- pent-Power' 68. (a) Atharva Veda: Kravyäd Agni, X: 16;
is invoked for the rites within special 9; X: 16: 4.
'Squares' allotted for these powers. Sesa, (b) Vaja Saneyi Samhita:
Taksaka, Ananta, Kaliya, even Nahusa are Kavya Vähana, 1: 17,
some of them. 69. Mahabharata, Sauptika, VI: 7.
46B. Ghora: The word is signi- ficant. 70. Mahabharata: Vana, I: 6: 7. 71. C.,
Ghora and Aghora signify Tantric sects (i) Gheranda Samhita,
given to highly mystic rites in- volving a (ii) Dattanaya Samhita,
behaviour pattern which could be (iii) Agtavakra Samhita,
repugnantly anti-Vedic, fierce, terrible, (iv) Patanjali, 1: 34; 11: 49.
obnoxious-and yet of abiding good to the 97. Ibid., 1: 69: 1.
terrified life that many men have to face 98. Ibid., II: 4: 5.
and live. 99. Ibid., II: 4: 5.
47. Prayer to Ketu and Rahu by Vyasa. 100. Ibid., 49: 2; III: 17: 4.
Kriya Kanda Vardhi, I: p. 889 (Basumati, 101. (a) Refer to an excavation (6th century
Cal- cutta). B.c.) of a Achaemenian Fire- Altar-
48. Bhagavata Purana, Legend of Kalindi Sanctuary near Pasargadae, capital of
and Balarama. (ancient) Cyprus re- ferred to in Indian My-
72. तनतिप्याम्यर्र्तस् त्वं त्वर्तगन प्रथर्ो thology as Karusa or. Kurusa (see Plate 32).
(b) Fire Altar on a dais
carved on tomb of Arta Xeraxes. (Hindu
From now on I relinquish my rights as Agni Mythologists name the Aksis as a line of
in your favour. Be thou the fore- most Agni Kings).
henceforth. I shall take the role of the (c) Arta Xeraxes at Parse- polis.
Prajapati fire (which in- creases progeny) as 102. Ibid., X: 88: 9.
your second and your follower. 103. Aitareya Brahmana, VIII:
-Mahabharata, III: 217: 16. 28, 9-13.
73. Ibid., III: 217: 18. 104. Rg Veda, V: 1: 4.
74. Rg Veda, VII: 3: 1. 105. Ibid., 1: 46: 1.
75. (a) Ibid., I: 146; III: 22. (b) Vaja Saneyt 106. Ibid., III: 20: 2.
Samhita, 17, 79. 107. Ibid., X: 88: 10.
76. Rg Veda, I: 79: 12. 108. Ibid., X: 45: 1; VIII :44: 19.
77. Ibid., VI: 7: 8. 109. Satapatha Brahmana, II: 1; Rg Veda,
78. (a) Ibid., I: 58: 5; VIII: 5: 3. VII: 15: 2; XIV: 6: 81 VIII: 49: 19.

79. Ibid., 1: 1:49.
80. Ibid., 1: 149: 2; VI: 12: 9; II: 4: 4.
81. Ibid., VII: 7: 1.
82. Ibid., VII: 15: 4; 1: 164: 52.
83. Ibid., I: 65: 9.
84. Ibid., 1: 79: 1.
85. Ibid., IV: 3: 1.
86. Ibid., 1: 49: 3.
87. Ibid., III: 14: 1.
88. Ibid., I: 127: 3.
89. Ibid., I: 68: 2; X: 1, 15:1.
90. Ibid., III: 29: 2; III: 23: 3.
91. Ibid., X: 7: 9.
92. Ibid., X: 2: 7; X: 46: 9.
93. Atharva Veda, 1: 33: 1.
94. Rg Veda, X: 45: 8.
95. Ibid., III: 29: 4.
96. Ibid., VI: 48: 5.
131. Ibid., VII:6:2; VIII:9, 3.
132. Mahabharata, 111: 2: 22.
133. Ibid., XI.
134. Ibid., 10-12.
135.Ibid., 20-25.
136.Ibid., IX: 38.
137.Ibid., IX: 41.
138.Ibid., IX: 42: 43.
139.Ibid., IX: 35.
140.तवष्णिोः कर्ामतण पश्यि यिो व्रितन पस्पशम इन्द्रस्यायुजिः
-Rg Veda: 1: 42: 19.

Watch Visnu's activities; all rites refer to India (RIC),IV.

110. Ibid., II: 1: 4; III: 5:4; X: 8: 5. 111. Ibid., III: 15; X: 87: 1. 112. Ibid., XII: 13; 1. 113. Ibid., V: 18: 2. 114. Ref. to No. 65 above. 115. Rg Veda, (a) I: 31: 4; IV: 15: 2-5. (b) Sacred Books of the East, 46: 361. 116. Rg Veda, X: 91: 2. 117. Ibid., VIII: 49: 10; 1:26:3. 118. Apam-Napat (A God known to avesta) has added to Vedic Legends enough in-

terestin connections with Vedic Traditions, III: 5: 3; and X: 45: 1-3. 119. Rg Veda, II: 7: 1. 120. Ibid., X: 69: 1. 121. Ibid., III: 23: 3. 122. Ibid., VIII: 92: 2. 123. Ibid., VIII: 19: 32. 124. McDonnell, Journal of Asiatic Soc., XXVI: 12: 22. 125. Rg Veda, VIII: 49; VI: 16: 1; X: 2:1; 1: 94: 6. 126. (a) Taittiriya Samhita, II: 5: 8: 3; (b) Vaja Saneyi Samhita (see 65 ante). 127. Rg Veda, IX: 66: 20: 1: 39; III: 2: 9: 3. 128. Ibid., X: 122: 2. 129. Ibid., X: 2: 4-5. 130. Ibid., VI: 15: 13.
141. Chatterji, Dr. S. K. Cult. Heritage of

him; He and Indra are friends and identical.

142.Devi Bhagavatam, IX: 43.
143.Ibid., 22-25.
144.Ibid., VI: 17-23.
145.Ibid., VI: 17.
146.Ibid., VII: 2-7.

ChapterEight

Hindu IconographyandSiva Forms

I

HinduIconographyandWesternMisconceptions

HINDU ICONOGRAPHYisanaltogetherinvolvedsubject worthy of a separate study. Popular opinion propagatesthehalf-truththatHinduism is idolatrous. Whilst it might not be a myth, such an opinionisbasedonignoranceandprejudice. Scholarship ignores such observations. All proselytisingreligionssurviveonthe skill of advocacy, besides using polemics, ridicule, sarcasms,satires,innuendoesandinvectives, as effective mechanisms for deluding the gullible asthesealsousethedemagogue's art of mud-slinging, incriminations, misinformations,misquotationswiththe explicit hope of misguiding the unsuspecting. Herein lies theinsufficiencyofreligion; and herein lies the supreme strength of philosophy. Whereverreligionhasfailed,philosophy has survived. Any religion that fails to answer philosophicalenquirieshastobe incomplete to an extent. Where religion has divided, philo-sophyhasunified;where religion stuffs with dogmas, philosophy liberates intellectandclearsenquiries.Religion speaks through the restrained language of a man of doubtscoveredbyauthoritarianism; philosophy speaks through the supra-expressions of symbols,signsandaboveallconviction. But above both these groups, stands the man Realised,theMystic,inwhomphilosophy has become religion and religion philosophy.

Silence is the most eloquent of philosophic expressions, of which icons are the most firm representations. A study of religious icons demands a study and knowledge of the metaphysical concepts of the divinity; it also demands a study of sculpture, and the subjective basis of sculptural forms.

Any mistake in it engenders serious misconceptions. Such representations are not what the so-called 'scientific' minds sneer as gods and goddesses: the representative forms, symbolic, diagrammatic, iconic or aniconic are objective records of subjective concepts. These are gods only in the same sense that the Sun is the God for Life; wind is God for the mariners; rain is God for the agriculturist; or, a lawyer is God for a litigant; so is dollar for U.S.A., champagne for France, Commerce for the Dutch and the British, or Banking for the Jew.

The idea of Deca or Devata is not conveyed by 'God', as of 'Dharma' is not conveyed by 'religion'. Every concept has its Devata, and Tattva which determines its Prakyti, and the Guna-combination. It is very close to the idea that is objectified in things like water, flower, diamond, milk, cow, cloth-each having its closeness, or awayness from the idea that is the cow, the diamond, water, flower, etc. Diamond's lustre, fire's heat, lamp's light-are the Tattvas or 'isms' of the thing. It is the 'Spirit' of the object, the 'Subject' of the object. This dominating spirit is Devald, not what is known as God. Naturally the misconception has led even master-minds to grave errors.

Dr. V. Smith, once regarded as an outstanding historian, thinks that "After 300 A.D. Indian sculpture, properly so called, hardly deserves to be reckoned as art. The figures both of men and animals become stiff and formal, and the idea of power is clumsily expressed by multiplication of members. The many-headed, many-armed gods and goddesses whose images crowd the walls and roofs of mediaeval temples, have no pretentions to beauty, and are frequently hideous and grotesque." Dr. Smith was not the only 'authority' to have criticised the Hindu figures of art; Sir George Birdwood, for example, has the following to note on the same subject: "The monstrous shapes of Puranic deities are unsuitable for the higher forms of artistic representations, and this is possibly

why sculpture and painting are unknown as fine arts in India." Sweeping statement supported by fantasy, intolerance and ignorance. They did not realise what they had been speaking about. Imaging the Mind, the futurism of Mind, projecting the Time dimension, i.e., the art of subjective projection-these are not everybody's meat, specially of those whose views on these subjects have been limited by the objective anatomical idealisms of the classical and Renaissance models. It was easier to expect Dickens to write like Hermann Hesse, Jean Paul Sartre or Steinbeck, than to expect the Victorians to understand, much less to appreciate, abstract and mystic art, specially presented by those peoples who were the victims of the non- white colonialism, engaged frantically in search of some justification.

Reorientation of Art-Conventions

Times have since changed. The Victorian tenets regarding the spread of the benign influence of the whiteman's culture find few respectable followers these days. The intellectual West has started to look at the non-West with a more logical and objective vision. The varied religious dimensions that separate man are under the pressure of constant battering from enquiries from comparative religious studies. Apart from exclusive political considerations, reorientation of the very bases and tenets of art, based on research, has added greater substance to the subject.

As a result, the standards and measurements of not only art-images have undergone changes in the West, but also its attitude to the Hindu religious system and the Hindu way of life. Art is no longer expected to be a photographic reproduction of formal life. Anatomical realism in art is now considered as definitely adolescent, even as decadent as any other form of voluptuous self-abuse. Maturity of any artistic temperament does not reach satisfaction in mere emulation. Reproduc- tivity is considered as the hall mark of maturity. Mere multiplicity of form in art is rejected in favour of the discovery of the singular. Art is to project ideas; provoke thought; beacon to the future; and reflect times to come, and minds not yet born. Art is now recognised as the medium for the expression of social subjectivism. Art is liberation of spirit. It has become more temperamental than

temporal. Art has become abstractionist. Not any longer the exactitude and proportional dictator- ship of the limbs is accepted as the inviolable language of the artist; today, instead, the complex texture of the evolution of the mind of man, inclusive of the mass-man, the prime-man, the tribe-man, their struggles, aspirations, revolts and hunger provide the challenging subjects of the artist. Modern art must reflect the tenor of this complex. No branch of art today is entirely free from this existentialist futuristic note. New art-codes have been invented; new dimensions discovered; sculpture, painting, literature, music, theatre, architecture-no medium of self-expression is any longer free from the religion of search above referred to, a search for Realism a new futuristic realism reflecting the ideal of the coming man. of thinking finds itself symbolised in art. Idealistic symbolism is no longer derided as grotesque. Intellectual enquiry desires to dive deeper into truth within a shorter area..

Hindu thought has always been trying to probe into the Infinite. Spirit, not form, of man, and of man's eternal quest, has been his subject of enquiry. The basic findings in the realm of Spirit, that are found re- corded in the Hindu tradition, are expressions of realised truths. These are known as Dhyana, or the meditational forms of the realised; in other words, such forms are the objective representations of the inexpressible subjective.

Truth here is of the very essence. Such truths cannot have any form. It cannot be either described or represented. Yet all the inspired seers have found it irresistible to preach and propagate the results of their realisations amongst the laity. It appears that it is in the nature of the Realised Truth that the favoured one must feel inspired; and the inspired one must speak and represent. Certainly Truth cannot be given any brazen form; for that matter, Truth cannot even be explained, or communicated. The ultimate Truth is essentially an experience. Silence is its only form of expression; then a dot, or a line; a symbol. No more. Even the faintest expressional representation of Realisation is charged with inherent inadequacy. A formal representation of the abstract is impossible through any medium other than the one of the soul, which alone holds the magic-mirror whereon Truth could be reflected in its proper dimensions for a secondary comprehension. Hence symbols represent man's attempt to express the inexpressible. To attempt any

representation of the Truth, through stone or metal, as in language, would be equally illogical and untruthful as to set limit to the unlimited.

Why then does man attempt such expressions, and strive to achieve the impossible? It appears that man does not enjoy his Experience until shared. Every time joy is shared, joy is doubled.

Value of Symbols: the Five Symbols of Rituals

The most effective: way of sharing the pleasure of intricate and abstract thought-sequencer, or emotional experience of the Sublime, has been the medium of symbols. By its very incompleteness symbolism holds a caution, and demands special treatment. The unreality of symbolic representations lends to symbolism an abstract value. Viewed from this angle, it would perhaps not be so impossible to imagine why did the ancient Hindus, the sublimest propounders of the subjective, always indulge in formal representations through various media. Mantra, Nyasa, Mudra, Asana, Dhyana, Yantra, Linga and Marti are the various methods that the Hindus have adopted to symbolise the abstract for the discipline and comprehension of the simple minds. Such discipline assists in raising the otherwise unsettled mind to the peace of the true seeker. It is a process of self-control through self-discipline.

1. Mantra

We have already gone into the esoteric value of Mantra in a previous chapter. Mantra is to be chanted, i.e., repeated with the full knowledge of the symbolism of Sound. The Mahesvara Sûtra discussed elsewhere illustrates the implications of the chain of Sound, Words, Chants, spiritual prayers as graded steps for attaining spiritual progress, as does the theory of Spanda of the Kashmir Saiva Siddhänta.

Mantra is a sound-sense symbolism practised through alphabets and words, often appearing inane and exotic. But these are invariably esoteric, loaded with significance; and these are quite different from the common chants and prayers. A-u-m is the supreme Mantra of the Hindus. It is a three-in-one sound-effect, signifying the ideas of the progress

of Life and Being stretching through the three stages of projection, growth and dissolution. There are equally significant Mantras, such as: Hring, Kling, Srim, Aing, etc., each having its own significance. Without the proper understanding of its significance the mere sound of a Mantra appears to the layman jibberish nonsense.

A Mantra and the number of the beads in a rosary, and the con- templation of the spirit in the Mantra are more than fixed and predeter- mined; these hold the life-link of the Mantras. The Agamic Tantras are explicitly clear about their significance.

The universe is a movement of various kinds of the ultimate substance. This movement is sensed in five ways. Whatever is heard in the sound made by some particular form of movement, and the hearing of mind and car, is again a form of movement. If there is no movement, there is nothing to hear.

Every utterance involves movement; and every movement could be illustrated; every picture is for the eye to apprehend, because, that which is visible, is colourful; and the colourless alone is both invisible and formless. Thus alphabets are pictured sounds, or pictures of movements in sounds, which is Power; they assume form in the shape of sound and appeal to the ear; and alphabets appeal to the sight. It is in this sense, as

manifestation

of Power that Alphabets and Mantras are Eternal. Alphabets evolve with sound, and dissolve into the meaning of the Sound, leaving only the image of the meaning fixed in Dhyana, which chastens contemplation. They evolve; they dissolve, as manifestations of the Great Mother Prakrti, of which the Yoni-form of the Gauri-Pitha (the seat of the white goddess) is a subtle linga-image. The three lines of the triangle stand for the three Gunas; and the circle stands for the move- ments inherent in Prakrti. Each of the Mantras thus illustrate two aspects of the Power; that which springs into manifestation, the Sustenance, the Meaning, the Link between Here and Beyond, the manifest and the unmani- fest, and the Ephemeral and the Eternal; and the other, the Cause of all this the Causal energy of all that is manifest, and is manifested. Any Power is an aspect of the Mother Power, the Matrix. The great invoca-tions are: Rsi Nyasa, Mätrkä or Lipi Nyasa, Sadanga Nyasa, Jiva Nyasa, Pitha Nyasa, Angusthädi Sadanga Nyasa, etc., etc.

After the worshipper has got himself attuned to the five Bhútas through Bhúta-Suddhi (purification of elements), he concentrates on the image, and says, 'He I am'; by placing his hand over the heart of the image he attempts to communicate the inner spirit with the outer, so that he would be worshipping nothing else but what is and has been within him. This is the reason why after the first Dhyana he places the first flower on his own head. Only after this does he take a second flower, repeat the Dhyana and make the offering directly to the image (or picture, or diagram, or linga, whatever the objective form before him has been placed). The image and the worshipper are thus attuned as One. The fifty letters of the Sanskrt alphabets, which inter alia compose the Mantra sounds, are now laid down on the fifty vital parts of the image, each letter being invoked with a special Mantra, and each letter being thus laid to rest on each of the fifty parts of the body. This is done with the intention and will that, as and when the Mantra-sounds are contem- plated and uttered the invocations of the sounds would infuse cosmic stirrings both in the worshipped and in the image, thus establishing a field charged with Power, the Power of the Cosmic with a special Will and special Function. Till this is established, at least to the conviction and faith of the worshipper, all worship of images is a formality. Legends have come down to us of such Yogis as Ramakrishna, Vämä, Ramaprasada, Kamaläkänta, Mira Bái, Jnänadeva, Tulsidasa and many others, which illustrate the point that the mental concentration of Yogic powers with the Cosmic Spirit conjure elements into living substances, and crystallise the cosmic self even into objects of urging devotion. The Sound, the Matter and the Life, these three become attuned by the cosmic effect. Sun is an obvious source of power; and the celebrated Gayatri is its Mantra form. Each of these manifested sources of power, good or evil, dark or bright, the five material elements, the five subtle forms, the sands in the desert, the stars in the sky, the downs on the baby's body, tae breaths of the sprouting grass blades, the stepping crawling hush of the centepede, the whisper of a dawn-dew-dropping from the tip of the green leaf,- each of these making its own sound-movement retain its secret mystic Mantra Form, and its

formal Devată. Thus each Devată has its Mantra-Form. More than the image, Mantra is the Devata. To the seeker (Sädhaka) Mantra is the living God; and the revealer of the

Mantra, the Guru, the living God in human presence. The Guru gives it life, passes on to the disciple, as a seed letter, a seed syllable, the living Sound-God, the Mantra.

2. Nyasa

Nyasa, the root verb in Sanskrt, (Ne) means 'to place'; and in the rituals concerning the worship of images it occupies a very important place. It concerns consecration of those centres of the body which, as centres of the nerve-complex in the system, by their respective good- shape and top order, assist meditation and concentration to be activised at their highest gear. Certain Mantras have to be chanted; specific Mantras, for specific parts of the body, which are touched by the fingers of the Seeker. There are various Nyāsas, some concern the inner centres of complexes, and some concern the external limbs or joints, i.e., some concern the subjective personality of the self, and some concern the actual body-machine. Both these outer and inner Nyasas are further subdivided into the two sections of creative power, and destructive power. There is thus a whole literature of Nyasa each applied to special invocation of the ethereal rhythm of the Mantra, which breathes life into the Image, and gives a habitation to the worshipper's consciousness. A vibrating field of responsive Consciousness is thus created, within which the worship- per and the worshipped not only merge as One, but in a worldly mundane sense the two become interdependent as Consciousness and Will.

Mantra is born of Guru; and Devată is born of Mantra. Thus, O Charmer, Guru stands to Ista Devata relatively as his grandfather. Serve the father, and the grandfather feels pleased; serve the grandson, it pleases the son. Serve the Guru, it pleases the Mantra; serve the Mantra; it pleases the Devata. Devată feels happy when both Mantra and Guru are served.

When after attainment of the previous human birth at the close of a journey through eighty-four lacs of births, the gate of a Jiva's good fortune is open, then Bhagavan Maheśvara Himself. appears before his eyes in the shape of a Guru. At the time the wheels of destiny have resolved to a point at which it places the Jiva in a position where

he can see all merciful Sadasiva standing before him as Jiva's Guru. Hence it often happens that the Guru, who has baffled search even for a hundred years, gratifies of his own accord, unsought and in one moment, the fortunate disciple without any effort on the latter's part....As a rule that fortune does not arrive unless it has been preceded by the germs of intense Sadhana performed in previous births."

3. Mudrä

Whilst the ritual of Nyasa takes care of the body, that of Mudra, by adopting certain symbolic figures made by twisting the fingers, and making figure-images, accentuate certain thoughts which, for the time, dominate the worshipper or the Sadhaka. For instance the Sadhaka knows that a firm seat should go to his advantage, as he would desire to be seated as firm and as still for as long hours as he would like to keep himself in a state of worship. He, therefore, speaks to his seat thus: "Please remain firm, as does the tortoise remain firm, in spite of the pres- sure of Matter which he bears on his back." He then contorts his fingers to the shape of a tortoise, and invokes with another contortion of his fingers, now resembling fish, the water-spirit, and invokes into the water the purity of several rivers. The first is the Karma (tortoise) and the next one is Matsya (fish) Mudra. Thus there is a series of Mudras prescribed: Welcoming, Bidding-farewell, Serving food. Requesting to feel at home etc., etc. Avähani, Sthapani, Sannidhäpani, Sambodhini, Sammukhi- karani, Sakalikarani, Dhenu, Samhära, Ankuša, etc., etc. These and others are taught by the Guru directly according to the needs of the Secker, for his Mantra-Siddhi (success in Mantra).

The learned in the Tantra have propagated what is known as Mudra for making the deities delight in them, and for chasing away the sins, for which all devotions are prescribed.

Body is an important instrument wherein resides the little heaven that man has not yet lost, and that has been, amongst other animals and lives, only 'his' privilege to resurrect. What we call Life is within the body; what we call Eternity, too, is within this body. The body is not it; but it is in the body.

Thus the body has been the field for an unsparing scrutiny of the seers, who adventured for a voyage to the shores of the Infinite. In the process they found it necessary to chart and map the entire nervous system which alone has the capacity to comprehend and realise the light 'that never was on sea or land'. Besides the nervous system the rest of the mass of the body is but the frame of a functioning instrument, which holds the key to the music, and yet not the music itself. This chartered field, namely the body, has been divided and subdivided to the extent that the Yogis could with confidence direct through certain processes a complete mastery over the discipline of concentration, which is absolutely necessary for tuning up the instrument to become an in-built automatic computer receiving and transmitting set for communications with the Infinite. (The most objective illustration of this complex world of nerves and its hold on the feelings of the body, even its inner injuries and incapacities, is the system of acupuncture which has been mystifyingly astonishing a sceptical multitude.) The Soul is capable of getting attuned to the music of the spheres only when the prescribed discipline is undergone. It is not manly and fair to laugh at a thing without giving it a fair trial. Mudräs are formed with great care; they are prescribed with great discrimination. Behind the science of the Mudras ages of practice alone stand as a proof. Rationalisation of the mystique of the conquest over a world not yet revealed is a hazard which is likely to baffle even the so-called intelligent without the assistance from the guides.

4. Asanas

Sthira Sukham-Asanam says the Yoga-Sutra. Asana is a seating posture adopted by the seeker (Sadhaka) to his best advantage in keeping firmly seated for long hours, when he could concentrate on his Yoga. Each individual, and each type of Yoga has its special Asana; whilst some of the Asanas are specifically meant for keeping the body-machine fit, some others are meant for removing physical defects, complaints and ailments.

There are 84 Asanas. For the practice of Asanas the posture of sitting is an important factor. It is a common belief that the Yogis, like the stoics, learn to ignore the body; yet some others feel that they should do 50. On the contrary, the Patanjali Yoga system

basically enjoins on the learner the importance of the body as the reservoir of the mind, which has to be controlled. To burn down the forest is not always the best way of trapping the lion. Taking proper care of the seeker's body is the primal concern of the Guru. Health in its true sense is the Guru's responsibility. The Asanas take care of the fitness of the conscious mind; of the alert and vivid sensitiveness of consciousness at all stages, which is attainable only through liberating the consciousness from the tyranny of the mind; of freeing the mind of the circuit of the reflexes of action- reaction; of elevating personal consciousness to a cosmic state so that the body itself becomes a nonentity to the vivified subjective state of the Yoga; and of making the body accustomed to subsistence through a very long period without having to attend to those common functions and calls which are inevitably associated with the body. Although the Asanas comprise of a series of physical exercises, these exercises do not propose as its objective the mindless development of the athlete, the egocentric development of a massive strong man; or an attractive acrobat; or a spectacular gymnast. Outwardly viewed Asanas are mere exercises, but in their symbolic significance they transcend their seeming purpose. Realisation alone is the hall-mark of success.10 Such realisation is achieved through a concentrated dedication and application alone." This, of course, calls for long hours of sitting in the same posture. That Asana is the best which suits the comfort of sitting for long hours without any type of physical strain.12

5. Dhyana-Linga and Murti

The last of the symbols of rituals is composed of Dhyana, the conceptual imaging: Linga, the symbolic image; and lastly, Murti, the image itself in its objective form and shape. These last are often viewed as Idols, and derided rather unmindfully, and removed scornfully under the duress of fanaticism.

The subject demands an elaborate treatment in two parts: (a) the esoteric function of images; (b) the technique of imaging image, or image as an art, in which Dhyana has to play the most vital part.

We have to wait a little for an elaborate treatment of the subject. At the moment we choose to deal with the more subtle form of the images, the iconic and aniconic symbols of Linga and Salagrama, and the diagram- matic forms of Yantras.

Hindus adopt various objects for the purpose of paying their homage to the Supreme Power, which no one sees. These objects could be an image, a picture, an emblem, a jar filled with water and decorated with foliage and flowers (Kalata), a piece of stone, Salagrama (in the case of the Visnu worshippers), or the unit of Linga-Yoni (in the case of Siva or Sakti worshippers), or a simple and innocent looking geometrical design, or a complex pattern of diagrammatic layout. These last are known as the famous Yantras.

In all worship of images or forms the Sadhaka must first invoke the Devată within himself and offer an internal worship, offering everything inwardly, without any outward expression. This is known as Atmapuja (worshipping the Self). Thereafter the Sadhaka starts infusing the Spirit of the Devata in the image or object before him, and welcome the spirit to come into life in the image.

This is known as Prana-Pratistha, or the Life-Infusing ceremony. If this part of the ceremony is ably conducted, it is claimed that the image becomes bathed with the lustre of the Power of Consciousness which the Sadhaka alone could feel, and absorb. It is immaterial if the image be a picture, a piece of stone, a diagram or of whatever material made. In matter lies veiled seemingly inert the Power which resides in the Sadhaka. It is a question of infusing the two into one. Caitanya (Consciousness) is aroused by the worshipper through the Präṇa-Pratisthä Mantra. An object exists for a Sadhaka only in so far as his mind perceives it. In him the Essence, as Consciousness, is realised.

Idolatry

This is a fitting place to say a word on the subject of the alleged 'idolatry' of the Hindus. We are all aware that a similar charge has been made against the Christians of the Catholic church, who demand that actual blood has been known to have flowed out of the holy bread conse- crated at the Eucharist. Those who are conversant with the charges and the

counter charges, and the barbarous killings indulged in the name of these beliefs, would be cautioned by the experiences of the past against any careless hysteric remarks in future.

It may well be doubted if the world contains an idolater in the sense in which the term is used. The Semetics, appear to be most sensitive about 'brazen images', and idolatrous practices. Yet, we all know about the wailing wall, the Passover rites, and the associated sacrifices, specially that of the Prepuce. About today's Islamic world let me quote a line from a well-known Egyptian author quoting one Mussalman dignitary about the practices in his own Islamic country, namely Syria.

After Kuwatly had signed the agreement, he had turned to Nasser and said jokingly, 'Congratulations, Mr. President, you don't know what you have inherited.... You have got people who pray to God, people who pray to the Devil, and you even have a sect who pray to a certain part of a woman's anatomy because they consider it the spring of life' 1"

According to the traveller A. B. Ellis (The Tahi Speaking Tribe of the Gold Coast of West Africa) "...even negroes of the Gold Coast are always conscious that their offering and worship are not paid to the inanimate object itself, but to the indwelling God, and every native with whom I have conversed on the subject has laughed at the possibility of its being supposed that he would worship or offer sacrifices to some such object as stone." Nevertheless a missionary, or some traveller might tell him that he did. An absurd attitude of the superior Western is that the latter -not merely tells the coloured races what they should believe, but what, notwithstanding the denials, they in fact believe, and ought to hold accord- ing to the tenets of the latter's religion.

The charge of idolatry is kept up, notwithstanding the explana- tions given about their beliefs by those against whom it is made. In fact, the conviction that Eastern races are inferior is responsible for this. If we disregard such belief, then, anything could be idolatrous. Thus who disbelieve in the Real Presence, the Catholic worshipper of the Host an idolater worshipping the material substance, a bread. But to the worshipper who believes that it is the body of the Lord, as He Himself had declared, such worship could never be idolatrous. Similarly, as regards he Hindu worship of images... all matter is,

according to Säkta doctrine, a manifestation of Sakti, that is, the Mother Herself in a material guise. She is present in everything which exists. The ordinary man does not so view things. He sees merely gross unconscious matter. If, with such an outlook, he was fool enough to worship what was inferior to himself, he would be an idolater. But the very act of worship implies that the object is superior and conscious. To the truly enlightened Säkta everything is an object of worship, for all is a manifestation of God who is therein

worshipped....This is established by the Prana-Pratisthā rites by which life is established in the image of the gross matter.... What difference does it make, it may be asked, really? How can a man's belief alter the objective fact? The answer is that it does not. God is not manifested by the image merely because the worshipper believes him to be there. He is there already. All that the Prana- Pratistha rite does is, to enliven the consciousness of the worshipper into a realisation of his presence. And if he be both in fact, and to the belief of the worshipper, present, then the image is a proper object of worship. It is the subjective state of the worshipper's mind that determines whether an act is idolatrous or not. The Prana-Pratistha rite is thus a mode by which a Sadhaka is given a true object of worship, and is enabled to affirm his belief in the divine omnipresence with respect to the particular object of his devotion. The ordinary notion that it is mere matter is cast aside, and the divine notion that divinity is manifested in all this, is held and affirmed. "Why not then," (some missionary has said) "wor- ship my boot?" There are contemptible people who do so in the European sense of the phrase. But, nevertheless, according to the Säkta teaching, there is no reason why even this boot cannot be worshipped by one who regards it, and all else, as manifestation of the one who is in every object which constitutes the many. Thus this monistic belief is affirmed in the worship of that which to the gross and ordinary mind is merely an object of lust. To such mind this is revolting and obscene worship. To those for who those object of worship is obscene, such worship is, and must be, obscene.... The Sakta Tantra affirms the Greek saying that to the pure all things are pure....The real objection to the general adoption of, or even knowledge of such rites, lies, from the monistic stand- point, in the fact that the vast bulk of humanity are either of impure, or of weak mind, and the worship of an object which is capable of exciting lust will produce it,

not to mention the hypocrites who, under cover of such a worship, would seek to gratify their desires. In the Paradise legends, just as amongst the primitive tribes, man and woman go naked. It was, and is, after they have fallen that nakedness is observed by minds no longer innocent. Rightly, therefore, from their standpoint, the bulk of men condemn such worship.... Those who go to meet temptation, should remember the risk. I have read that it is recorded of Robert d'Arbissel, the saintly founder of the community of Fonte d'Evrault that he was wont on occasions to sleep with his nuns, to mortify his flesh, and as mode of strengthening his will against his demands. He did not touch them, but his exceptional success to preserve his chastity would be no ground for the ordinary man to undertake such a dangerous experiment.

(In a previous chapter we have referred to the life of Tsangyang Gyatso, Gyalwa Rinpoche of Tibet, and about the legends of their sex-excesses; notwithstanding all of that the saintliness of Gyalwa Rinpoche is even today respected. For none of us, except the most brutal,' says Thubten Jigme Norbu, 'is man's relationship with woman only one involving physical contact and pleasure. But few can have raised the relationship to such heights as Tsangyang Gyatso.' Those who know the life history of the great Tantra Sadhaka, Räjä Ramakrishna of Natore, would know that he as a Bhairava used his wife as Bhairavi. Ramakrishna Paramahamsa on his first night with his wife started with a Mother worship making the newly married wife represent the Goddess; and that relationship never was allowed to alter bit.)

...to revert to the Missionary's boot; whilst all things could be the object of worship, choice is naturally made of those objects which, by reason of their effect on the mind, are more fitted for it. An image, or one of the usual emblems, is more likely to raise in the mind of the worshipper the thought of a Devata than a boot (unless the boot were that of Jesus, Caitanya, Sri Rama, the Guru, or of saints like Francis of Assissi, Moinuddin Chisti, Hazrat Muhammad, Aurobindo, etc.), and therefore, even apart from scriptural authority it would not be chosen. But it has been again objected, if the Brahman is in, and appears equally in all things, how do we find some affirming that one image is more worthy of worship than another. Similarly, in Catholic countries we find worshippers who prefer

certain churches, shrines, places of pilgrimage and representations of Christ, His Mother and the Saints. Such preferences are not statements of absolute worth, but of personal inclination of the worshipper due to his belief in his special efficiency for him. Psychologically all this means that a particular mind finds it works best in the direction desired by means of particular instruments. The image of Kali generally provokes only disgust in an European mind. But to the race- consciousness which has evolved that image-deity, it is cause and object of fervent devotion. In every case those means must be sought and applied, which will produce a practical and good result for the individual consciousness in question. It must be admitted, however, that image worship is capable of abuse; (for that matter any and all worship to boot) that is a wrong; and for want of a better term, an idolatrous tendency may manifest. This is due to ignorance. Thus the aunt of a Catholic school boy friend of mine had a statue of St. Anthony in Padua. If the Saint did not answer her prayers, she used to give the Saint a beating, and then shut it up in a cupboard with its face to the wall' by way of punish- ment. I could cite numbers of instances of this state of mind taken from the past and present history of Europe. It is quite erroneous to suppose that such absurdities are confined to India, Africa and other coloured countries. Nevertheless in each case we must distinguish between the true scriptural teaching, and the acts and notions of which they are an abuse.15

In connection with the subject of actual imaging of the Murtis, and their symbolic messages, we have noted how the stages of Dhyana and Dharand become important for giving form to the images. Ideas spring from inspirations and visions; and these ideas make one contemplate. The contemplation aims at striking at the nearest verisimilitude between the Idea and its Execution, for which the selection of material is also of prime importance. Thus the Hindu-images represent Dhyanas. As Mantra represents Devata in its sound-form, so does the Murti represent Devata in a plastic form. The Mudras, Tantras and the Mandalas represent the same ideas in curves and lines. In any case the stage of Dhyana be- comes unavoidable and essential. The Ideal itself speaks through the representations, and assists the worshipper in keeping his mind steady on an even keel. This describes the grotesque in the image- forms; this describes why the Western critic

does not find the artistic satisfaction in considering a Hindu image in a museum when he delights so much in a Hellenic classical representation; a Pan, a Satyr, a Venus, a Madonna. In order 'to see' into Hindu art, 'the third-eye' is required. One has to contemplate, and then image the idea, and not the form; the equivalence, and not the symmetry; the urge of the cosmic, and not a photostat of the body.

As one of the principal components of the artist's acquisitions, the Hindu assigns a high place to the artist's inner vision. Both Varähamihira and Sukrācārya have enjoined the Hindu image-artist to approach their respective subjects with a complete mastery over the corresponding Dhyana. Even today the traditional artists of the Hindu images, of any class or creed (there are many non-Hindus in India who are traditionally reputed as image makers) are supposed to be authorities of a certain Even the Brahmins who are supposed to in- Dhyana for a specific Marti. struct them respect their traditional knowledge.
Absorption of the subjective part of the object to be represented was much more important than mere dimensional proportions. Whilst skill has to limit itself to ob- jectivity, mind has to keep itself absolutely open towards the final Goal. Only then the fact of executing the image in accordance with its subjective message becomes a reality. For this a deep meditation climaxing into a spiritual comprehension, or, in other words, Dhyana climaxing into Dharand, and achieving the celebrated Samprajñata-Samadhi (a tranced state of vivified knowledge) is essential and unavoidable.

Dhyana being the essence of the meditator, the 'Form' and He, the pure identity. meditated
and the meditator, find themselves in a state of The meditator becomes thus a subject-object: the seeker-sought.

Naturally the representation of such profound and abstruse con- templation of the abstract
is bound to be unfamiliar and symbolic, obscure and even shocking. To the casual sight-seer it is even grotesque. Before one faces the subject of Hindu mythological concepts, one must equip oneself with the concomitant competence of judging or even observing it. In the language of Romain Rolland, one must feel oneself "in the skin of the Hindu'.

6. Types of Icons and Murtis

Such representations are of three types.

A. Purely symbolic, and aniconic forms: These are not images as such, but symbolic reminders of venerated deities. The Bana Linga or the Salagrama falls under this category.

B. Yantras: Diagrammatic representations of the ideas concerned. These are carved on metals, crystals, stones or on mere papers, paper substitutes, or even on the bare floor.

C. Anthropomorphic form: These, again, are of two types. (a) Zoomorphic; where the human form has parts representing some animal, or bird; or just an animal; and (b) where the form, though human, has many hands, feet, eyes, heads, etc. Very rarely, if at all, except in the cases of deified humans, accepted as the incarnated forms of the Supreme, the Hindu image-forms represent a human being.

A. The Iconic Forms: Bana Linga and Salagrama

The Siva icon known as Bana Linga, are stone pebbles recovered by a bathing devotee with his own hands from a river-bed, but from the river. Narmada, in particular. These pebbles are naturally of different sizes, shapes and colours according to the nature of the stone rocks of which these would have been a part. "Any Kankara (pebble) from Narmada represents Samkara (Siva)," goes the saying. A devotee takes a dip; and with the first dip picks a stone; that is 'his' stone. He places that on a metal Gauri-pitha, and worships.

A similar stone pebble from the Northern river-bed of the Gandaki represents Visṇu. These pebbles from the Gandaki are round-shaped ammonites with spirals cut into their bodies making large or small holes. The different shapes and sizes and tints as well as the different designs in which the spirals have been naturally cut into, go to interpret different significance to the devotee concerned.

These have been often abused in Western descriptions as being phallic. "Of all the representations of all the deities (Siva) that India has imagined, these are perhaps the least offensive to look at. Anyhow, they are the least materialistic." In fact the choice of the

iconic forms to replace the anthropomorphic or zoomorphic forms was in protest of idolatry. To cut the Linga as a phallic symbol had been a pre-Vedic practice, and had drawn criticism from the Vedas, 17

The Puranas have different legends (q.v.) on both the Narmada and Gandaki. These contain within themselves suggestions of a gradual extension of syncretism in matters of religious forms and contents between the peoples from the North and those from the South; and between the Vedic and the homogeneous peoples; and between the immigrants and the locals.

The Siva Symbols: This is not the place for discussing the Visnu symbols and the Salagrama. But we shall take up further the discussion on the Siva-symbols. Are these symbols Phallic? Let us judge for ourselves. These symbols are, to start with, mere pieces of stones, chance collected, and naturally shaped by the flow of a river into a small pebble. These are aniconic symbols. The importance of the river Narmada in the spread of the Aryan culture in the subcontinent is great. Those who are aware of the legends of Agastya's crossing over the Vindhya-range, or of the struggle between Kärtaviryärjuna and Ravana would appreciate the depth of this conflict. The pebbles from this river-bed stand as a reminder to the spread of the Maheśvara Saiva form of worship of Siva amongst the more orthodox Vedic people. The Talajanghas of Mähismati, the rulers of Chedi and the Haihayas, contributed much to the popularisation of the Saivic rites throughout India. Mähismati-civilisation was known for maintaining the sacrificial fire alight night and day. This relation of Fire or Agni with the Siva rites forms one of the most absorbing syncretic traditions of Hinduism. All this together makes the Bana-Linga so signi- ficant to the devout Saiva (cf., the Khajuraho temples.)

The acceptance of these iconic and aniconic symbols as deities cut through the entire complexities of the Vedic Fire-rites; and made worship as a form not only individualistic, but also democratic, as such worship could be offered by the individual without the intervention of the speci- alised Brähmanic assistance.

As such the acceptance of these rites completely synthesised two anta- gonistic creeds. Today in all sacramental rites, inclusive of the Vedic rites, the presence of the Salagrama or of Bana-Linga simplifies matter by cutting through a variety of elaborate practices enjoined by the Grhya Sutras. (Codes for the House-holders.)

Hand-made Icons: the Clay-modelled Siva: Next to the aniconic figures come the hand-made figures. Of these the most popular and the most touchingly interesting ones are the tiny clay-models of the symbolic Siva which are modelled everyday, endearingly, with tiny lumps of river clay, and which, after the daily prayers, are relegated to the same river, symbolic of life coming out of the same stream towards which it flows to be accepted and covered up at the end of a journey.

The value of the silted alluvial soil to the people of the river-valleys, specially to the people of the delta and river-mouths, like the people from Bengal, Mesopotamia, or the Nile is immense. Cultures and river-valleys are very closely associated. The peoples of all these cultures have been known, in some part of their history, to have modelled deities out of this clay, and offered their homage to this rich wealth gifted by the Great Mother as a behest..

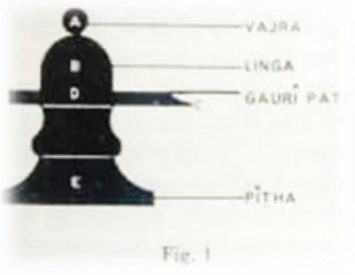


Fig. 1

The devotee takes a lumpofthis soft clay, and makes a figure out of the lump as shown in Fig. 1. The Figure shouldhaveno joint anywhere,

except at one point. Itistheround ball atop the model. This round ball (A) is known as Vajra; and it is placedonthehead of the deity, to be displaced later. The two arcs of the seating table join at thepointC. This is known as the Pinaka. The circle so formed is D,

and the base is E. C, B, and D have already been described before, as Siva and the Gauri-Patta. They stand respectively for the conscious microcosm, the Cosmic Seed, from which manifestations emanate, and the dynamic macrocosm, the Matrix, represented by a circle which is the field of energy that causes the still-Conscious to act into the phenomenon of manifestation. The total concept is the descen- sion of Siva or Grace to the level of the Conscious prayers of the devotee. Vajra itself is a word of great significance. In the Tibetan mysticism this word has earned great value. Those who are interested would do well to study the secrets of Vajrayana as exposed in the Himalayan Tantras. In any case the Hindu worship of the clay-Siva does not start before the Vajra has been ceremonially removed by the devotee. The Siva rites are popular amongst the Tibetans, the Näthas, who are aware of Vajra Yogini, Vajra Nätha, Vajra Suci, etc. As such, the cultish slant in the clay-modelled rites, as well as their esoteric significance is respectfully kept out of the way of the house-holder's daily worship of Siva.

One of the names of Vajra is Sambhů, which, again, is an honorific of Siva. The use of words like Sambhů and Vajra in relation to the worship of Siva signifies a synthesis of two cultures, Sub-Himalayan and Ante-Himalayan. It is also noted that the ritualistic worship of the clay-Siva demands the removal of the Vajra with the Mantra 'Hara', meaning 'Remove'. Hara itself is one of the many honorifics of Siva,

Vajra: It is a double headed mace-like weapon (Fig. 12 H. p. 903) in mysticism of Mahayana system of Tibetan Tantra. It is symbolised by the union of two triangles touching intercepting at the apex (Fig. 4, p. 899). It represents Fig. 12 H'.

and the most popular in the Himalayan range. This could mean that the river-valleys had accepted the worship of the modelled Siva without the overtone of Lamaic Tantricism.

Pinaka means a bow. It also means a lance, or a pointed weapon. But etymologically it means 'Power to Protect'. In the Puranas Pinaka has been mentioned as a special weapons for Siva, and that it is a bow; but the name of the bow was Ajagana (a rainbow, the southern course of the sun).

Bell-metal and Copper: The use of bell-metal, and copper in the rites of Siva has its own significance. Copper, a reddish metal, has been known to have been used, in contradistinction with gold or silver, by the and pots non-Aryan culture, and the tribes. The sacrificial for vedic pans Yajna are made of wood, metal, preferably, copper. These are used for ritualistic fire-worship, the rites for the Manes (Pitrs), and Siva worship. Siva is fond of copper. The bell-metal plate is a 'must' in the worship of the clay-modelled Siva. Copper and its later development in bell- metal are associated with the peoples who were experts in metallurgy, casting, and, above all, bronze images. This has been a characteristic of the Tamils of the South, and perhaps, by suggestion, that mysterious people, the Phoenicians (red). The use of this metal in the Saiva-rites could indicate another sign of the synthesis of two different cultural strains.

B. (i) Tantras: Abstract Designs

Before we come back to Images proper, that is anthropomorphic images, we take up the other subtle form of image, the Yantras. These are designs and patterns mostly evolved out of geometrical figures of lines and curves. Outwardly these look like puzzles. But all ancient and mystic religions have been using such signs for spiritual purposes. Like the world of music and fire, the use of herbs and serpent-motifs in spiritual rites, have their own world in mysticism.

The root of the word Tantra in Sanskrt means 'to restrain and to fasten'. It also means a mechanism. It indeed could be seen as a

In the hazardous days of the first Christian ministrations the mystic sign of the fish, A Fühsign has made out of the union of two arcs signified the brotherhood. been used by the mystics all over the world. The double fish symbol is Taoist Like Pinaka-sign it is also indicative of the double function of chaos and cosmos; of the arcs of the sky and the earth. Many read in this sign the phallic, the joined arcs suggesting the female genitals, or the Yoni. But Yoni really means the Source of manifested beings; it is a field of active 'principles' and is similar to the idea contained in the concept of Matrix. In any case it is abstract and ideological, and not physical. In Saivism the Fish, or Matsya Mudra signifies

the soul in the flux of life; a Two-in-One symbol. We must remember that the Essines, or Jesus could not have used a phallic symbol for their message.

mechanism for controlling passions, and fastening the slippery mind to a concentrated objective. A Yantra as a diagram is invented by a Seer, and interprets an idea-world revealed to him by his experience of the Cosmic. He says what he says in lines and curves. Its main objective is to fasten the mind to a defined objective. It helps in Dharana, in keeping the concept clear before attention.

Thus to the initiate a Yantra works as a target-practising bull's-eye would for an archer, a rifle-man. The best practitioner would not be sure of his skill unless carried to an open field, and left to fend for himself under challenging circumstances. It is true that there alone the final test is taken. But it is also true that anyone who has not been disciplined even under conditioned-exercises would find it almost fatal to have to face directly a living test in a living situation. Such a hit-or-miss theory deprives the victim of the lessons of experience, training and other cir- cumstantial education, without which fatal situations could multiply, and life and efforts could go waste. Every life cannot afford to make a fresh start from the ape-man, or a cave man, and finish with a Socrates or a Tagore within the course of a normal life-span given to humans. Profits of human experience denied, achievements of culture do not crawl beyond a flint-axe, or a fish-bone. In the race of life Man is a perpetual runner in a Marathon between milestones of ice-age and ice-age,
eternity and eternity. Hence the seeker's quest for a Guru. He is the teacher, the guide, the lighthouse: he is grateful to that fixed point of light as a voyager in the uncharted open sea is to the pole star. If reaching is the objective, knowledge of previous experience is essential, as charts and logs are for successful piloting. The path of the spirit is long, lonely and hazardous. Of necessity it has to be a solitary undertaking. To discover it, A to Z, all by oneself is an absurdity. The seed that sprouts this spring, and is harvested this autumn, had had behind it the makings of many summers. Similarly, the man experienced had had behind him the cumulative benefit of a series of lives that helped him to blossom into a perfect Yogi. "The wise realise Me after many a birth;" "Long are the years one spends in the cycles of righteous births, before one, a defaulting Yogi assumes birth in a

home where there is peace, purity and plenty....Such births in this world are hard to come by." One single life-span would never be able to reach the spiritual consummation. Fortunately for the Hindu, Life is a perpetual spring, blossoming from eternity to eternity; and the 'Circle of Life' is intimately bound with the cycle of aspiring, arising and achieving. Where then is the hesitation to borrow from experience?

Yantras are guides to the Infinite; and in no way are meant to be the Infinite. In fact most diagrams are illustrative of the mystery of the unmanifest becoming the manifest. Curves and lines on plain surfaces of stones and metals, seemingly looking as puzzles really hold, as geo-metrical diagrams of theorems, great abstract truths, which could otherwise be forgotten, or got mixed up. Yantras attempt to preserve the Infinite within the Finite, as a bowl of water attempts to contain the reflection of the sun, or the moon. It delights, and teaches, fascinates, and concen- trates. The initiate regards it as the prototype of the Real.

As sounds, which reflect the language of the cosmic, are formed into alphabets, and as the same alphabets design the sense of the Mantras, so do the dots and lines design the ideographic forms of the abstract principles which are better understood through abstract forms. Language cannot always claim to be the most perfect medium of communication. Hence the Sadhakas hit upon a form, which could transcend the limitations of linguistic expressions, and hurdle over language barriers. Pure contemplation, Yantras, Mandalas, Mantras, aniconic symbols, vegetable symbols, animal symbols, and lastly, zoomorphic or anthropomorphic representations gradually assist in communicating to the seeker the message of what he so devotedly longs for appreciation and understanding.

Eastern minds, well acquainted with the lines and dots of geometry and astronomy, found the uses of these abstract expressions highly useful for communicating complex experiences and theses. As the Eastern Yogis found their experience communication-worthy, and as they had been in search of some appropriate medium for communicating their complex ideas, without the barriers of language, they automatically resorted to the age-old methods of using the schematic dots and lines which had once assisted them in chartering the stars and planets, and holding the highest mathematical discoveries. The

diagrams and ideograms which we now accept as the Yantras are the results of this form of spiritual commu- nication. These retain the subtlest and profoundest metaphysical intri-cacies of thought in almost straightforward lines and curves; and the initiated would never deviate from the logicality of the actual process of passage, once these Yantras are before them. These Yantras actually impart the profoundest of secrets to their inner soul without anyone hearing what they preach. The messages thus remain intimately personal; and the Yantras assume the venerable importance of direct messages from the living gods. The Yantras become the other bodies of the Devatas. Woodroffe, in considering the Real as an aspect of the Universe, or in other words, in considering the Immense and the Real-Causeless as measurable and finality-filled, calls it the Cause of whatever we call as the Universe. Form is Maya in the system. It is never an illusion (as) is generally believed) but another expression of Power, Power with a Will of its own. This Power makes the independent Soul yield to the im- pulses and bonds of ego, ownership and affection. He calls the Immense- Real as the Illogical One; and then proceeds to name the two aspects of Siva and Sakti. The play and inter-play of these 'two' (or of the One as the Two) resuits in the phantasmagorial wonder known as the Samsara, the ever-slipping (VSr -to slip) phenomenon of this playfulness. The doctrine is neither dualist, nor non-dualist; but beyond both.

This is the dialectics of the phenomenon. But there should be some- thing more substantial than mere dialectics. This is experience.

Spiritual Experience of the Illogical Immense is certainly disturbed by this play-world of the One split into two phases. There is a great chance of being kept mesmerised by this wondrous play, and being led away from the Immense, and its experience. Hence the devotee, whilst accepting the play, would like to do better than getting waylaid. Thus the indication left in a diagram becomes the living symbol of an ideogram illustrating the inner and the basic truth about Reality, and the steps by which the One could be reached through this fascinating forest of maniness. These are the Yantras.

What is the real nature of this Illogical Experience? How to know that from which all became known? That First of Creation, the Being, the Purusa-did He create all? or did He not? He verily would know it whose vision controls this world at the highest heaven; does He, or even He does not? The mind returns baffled; speech comes back dumbfounded. Language has nothing to offer in expressing the mystery of Experience.

Though it cannot be conceived, or put into words, some con- cepts are held to be more appropriate to it than others. And thus it is approximately said to be Infinite Undetermined Being, mindless Experiencing and Supreme Bliss.... It is Cidrúpini Siva-Sakti, Being, Consciousness and Bliss,

This Experience has nothing to do with the feelings of 'I' and 'That'. In the causal state it is the Real; and in its universal state it is the Effectual. The Illogicality ceases to be a concept, and forms itself into the materiality of Ether, with Sound as its evolute, wherein Consciousness and Space are interlocked as Siva and Sakti. Apart from this physical ether, from where sound evolutes, there is a spiritual Space with spiritual Ether pervading, of which the evolute is Consciousness. Here too Consciousness is, and remains, interlocked with the phenomenon of Spiritual Oneness. The Immense assumes measurability, the Real becomes the universe, due to the intervention of the playfulness known as Mayd. The Immense and the Power of Being are pictorially represented as bounded Space and Point. This bounded space has been drawn within three lines; and the dot within is the Bindu. The interlocking could be described in many forms, and each form conveys its inner meaning to the Sadhaka as he feels it easier to receive it. There is no enforced Yantra to be followed. The Guru gives the Yantra which becomes living through easier acceptability.

"Passing to Yantric symbols, the Male-Power-Holder Siva is re- presented by a triangle standing on its base. A triangle is selected as the only geometrical figure which represents Trinity in Unity--the many triads such as Willing, Knowing and Acting in which the one Consciousness displays itself. Power or the feminine principle, or Sakti, is necessarily represented by the same figure, for Power and Power-Holder are one. The Sakti triangle, however, is shown reverse, i.e., stand- ing on its own apex. Students of ancient symbo-

lism should be aware of the significance of this figure. To such reversal, however, philosophic meaning may also be given, since all looks reversed when reflected on the watersofMaya.

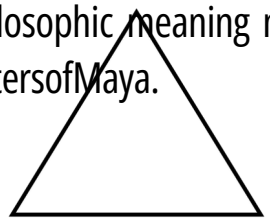


Fig 2

Fig 3

"Why,itmay now be asked, does the Säkta lay stress on the Power, or the Mother aspect of Reality? Like all other Hindus, he believes in a static Real as Immutable Being-Consciousness which is the ground of that, and serves to main- tain that, which, in this system is the dynamic Real. He will point out, however, that the Mother is also one of Her aspects of the same nature as Siva, who is such a static Real. But it is She who works; She alone also moves the material cause. He, as the immutable Being, does and can do Hence the nothing without Her as His power. Kaula Säkta symbolism shows Siva as lying inert, and to be, deprived of His Power, but a corpse (Sava).

Fig 4

"Even when associated with Sakti as efficient cause Siva does not move. A not uncommon picture, counted obscene (see later for 'Obscenity'), is merely the pictorial symbol of the fact that Being, even when associated with its active power, is Immu-table. It is She, as Power, Who takes the active and changeful part in generation, (see Plate 24), as also is conceiving, bearing and giving birth to the World- Child.

Fig5

Allthisisfunctionofthedivine,asitisofthehumanMother.InsuchworkMaleisbuta helper(Sahakari).InothersystemsitistheMotherWhoisthehelperofSiva.Itisthusto theMotherthatmanowestheWorldofFormorUniverse.WithoutHerasthematerial cause,Beingcannotdisplayitself.Itisbutacorpse(Sara).BothSivaandSaktigivethat supremeBeyond-WorldTheyareeachJoywhichisliberation(MuktiParamananda). supremeConsciousnessandBliss.TheMotherisAnanda-Lahari,orWaveofBliss.To attaintothatistobeliberated.ButSakti,theMother,isalonethegiverofWorldJoy (Bhukti:Bhamananda),sinceitisShewhobecomestheUniverse.AssuchSheisWaveof Beauty(SaundaryaLahart).Further,itisthroughtheFormasworldthatShe,asalsoSiva, are intheirformlessselfattained.If,however,unionissoughtdirectlywithRealityinits non-worldaspect,itmustnecessarilyberenunciation.Liberationmay,however,be attainedbyacceptanceof,andthroughtheWorld,theotheraspectoftheReal.Inthe Sakta methoditisnotbydenialoftheWorld,butbyandthroughtheWorld,whichshould be knownastheMother,thatliberationisattained.Worldenjoymentismadethemeans and instrumentofLiberation(MokjayateSamsdra).TheSäktahasboth(Bhukti-Mukti). This essentialunityoftheWorldandbeyondWorld,andpassagethroughandbymeansof

the former to the latter, is one of the most profound doctrines of the Sakta, and is, nonetheless so, because their application of this principle had been limited to man's gross physical functions, and such applica tion sometimes has led to abuse. For these and other reasons primacy is given to the Mother, and it is said: 'What care I for the Father, if I am on the lap of the Mother!"

I note here in connection with the primacy of the Mother-God that in the Mediterranean (Aegean) civilisation the male god is said to have been of a standing inferior to the Mother, and present only to make plain her character as the fruitful womb whence all that exists, springs (see Plates 23, 24).

Yantras picturise these abstruse thoughts and analytical Tatteas regarding the Reality. Yantras too, thus, assist a great deal in keeping mind steady along the path of self-discovery. Each of these refers to the aspects of the analysis given above.

Some Tantras explained: Yantras are as many as there are poems in the world. Each poem is a 'first' for the poet whose feelings and moods, or even messages are communicated by the poem. There is and ought to be a point in all emotional expressions, of which a message forms its substance. Thus a Yogi's adventures into the Infinite often is pin-pointed by a Yantra of either his making, or of his Guru's directive gift. The Realised speaks in symbols and diagrams; because what he realises is so abstract and incommunicable. In spite of this inherent limitation a Yogi, or even an aspirant makes use of a diagram, a Yantra which acts as the best form of expression of the Ideal he seeks. We cannotdealwith all of them.

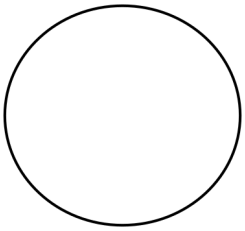


Fig 6

We shall deal with only few of the Yantras. Fig. 6 is a circle with a centre. The centre is Šiva, the ultimate Reality, round which or within which all creations move; but Siva and His Creative World is, even whilst in perpetual movement, all One. The figure is an elaboration of a single theme. The central theme is understood, comprehended, but not so easy to be adhered to as a focal point during meditation. To have it secured in grasp during the process of the concentrating exercise the figure proves of immense value; hence the Yantra.

The next figure (Fig. 7) is an equilateral triangle, representing Space confined within the field of manifestation; and as in all manifestations, also contained within the three Gunas. As Modes or Evolutes, the Gunas contribute the Prakṛti-characteristics to objects manifested. But the central theme is the One; the active urge, which pervades the Space, springsout of this One. The Immense Brahman, becomes the Powerful Prakṛti, the Guna-formedMother, the very Matrix of evoluting life.

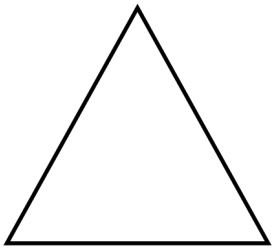


Fig 7

TheCircle shows Motion, perpetuity, the aspiration of the active Source; but the three linesinthe triangle contain the ever-motional Power of Energy within the limits of the Gunas.The Immense Spacious vacuum charged with Energy shoots forth the evolutes and manifestations generated out of the sublime Matrix. The least lines by which Space could be specified are three and not less. All beings are classified into these three spiritual constituents: Sattva, Rajas and Tamas. This becomes very important for spiritual training, much in the same manner as proper IQ-tests and Efficiency-tests classify the academic aptitude of a student. We have noted before how an imbalance of the Gunas cause all manners of suffering to the soul and the mind. Yoga strives to reach a balanced state; as

each human being has these three constituents in an imbalanced state, and as a balanced state is all that an individual strives for his peace, this symbol of equilateral triangle best describes to the individual the spiritual state he aspires to reach. The triangle, therefore, of which all the sides are equal, signifies the world, as divided into three elemental and mental modes; as it also holds up in diagrammatic message the final form of Peace to which a supremely balanced mind could legitimately lay claims on.

Fig. 8 is a combination of Figs. 6 and 7. The circle with the equi- lateral triangle in it, and with a centre, means the creation-within the cosmic field encompassed, within one dynamic law that operates around one central Princi- ple, Śiva. Within its manifested forms, this principle retains its gradations of mental and elemental modes.

Fig 8

This is the Mother Power. It works through 'negation, contraction and finalisation'. It is the subtle functionalism in which the One gets activised and expressed through a process of Tattvas, functional processes, numbered Thirty-six. Thus Thirty-six remains a sacred esoteric number, always acting as a reminder to the Unity underlying the diversity of the world-phenomenon. The secret of the Thirty-six is also laid down in the ancient Mantra scriptures. Mudra being the posture-form of these Tattvas, Mantra is their sound-form. Mantra, therefore, is a very important subject in the disciplinary exercises leading to spiritual liberation.

Sound as lettered speech is the vehicle of thought, and mind is a vehicle of consciousness for world-experience. The picture of Siva riding a Bull is the popular representation of this fact. Bull in Sanskrt is 'Go', which also means Sound. Nada as inchoate stressing sound is shown in the form of a crescent moon on His head. The cult of the Bull is an ancient one, and it may be that originally the animal had no significance as Sound, but subse- quently, owing to the sameness of the Sanskrt word for Bull and Sound the animal became a symbol for sound. Sometimes a more

Fig. 9.

Fig. 10.

lofty conception is degraded to a lower one. It is here noteworthy thatthe crescent moon worn on the head by Diana and used in the worship of other goddessesis said to be the arc or vessel of boat- like shape, symbol of fertility, or the container of theGerm of Life.24

But before the topic is closed a few more Yantras need to be described. It has been a common spiritual pastime of bigots to associate any trian- gular shape, worshipped and adored by men, with the female genitals; and any circular design as a point of coitus; and a straight line as a male phallus. The most important of these has been described before, in the two isosceles triangles representing Siea (the triangle with the mass-base held down to represent the 'pull of Tamas' reaching on apex of Sattva, like a burning flame) and Sakti (the triangle with the base of mass crea- tion radiating through manifested Power from a

point, 'Bindu', to a world of forms). Since the Sakti, or the female triangle is up and active, poised over the Siva, or the male triangle, which lies inert as a corpse (Sava), often in pictorial forms of female-male the subject is called obscene.

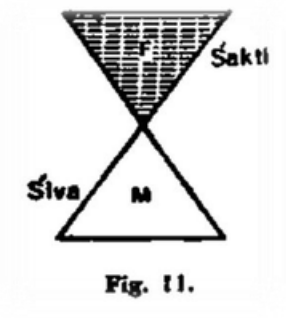
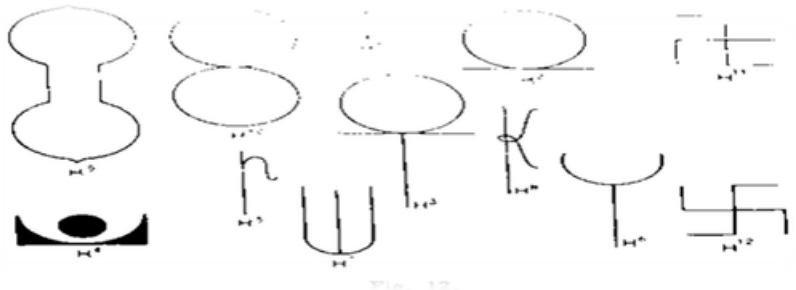


Fig. 11.

This is the Viparita (Reverse) posture in the mystery of creation (Refer to the Egyptian mysticism of Nut and Geb: Sky and Earth-Papyrus of Tamenieu (see Plate 23) 1102-952 B.C.-11th



Dynasty, as also to the figure of Chinnamastä (see Plate 24). Fig. 11 is its most familar representation. Figs. 12 H1-H10 are familar adap- tations of the same underlying principle. These latter ones are found quite popular in, what Woodroffe calls, the Aegean culture of Crete, Chaldea, Egypt and Judea.

There is a Yantra reversing the position of F and M in the Yantra (Fig. 11): the top triangle in that case, means the Reality, Siva; and the bottom triangle means the reflection that Śiva Himself casts in the fluid of Māyā, making the One look like many. This interpretation conforms with the metaphysical interpretations of the Abhasa-väda theorists of Kashmir (q.v.).

But, by and large, these Yantras have drawn condemnations from a host of sensitive pseudo-moralists. They call them erotic, obscene, phallic. Phallicism, worship of the generating limbs of a functional machine, which is the primitive form of adoration for the mystery of Life, is quite different from Saivism, or Tantra. To call them obscene on the strength of a superfluous analogy causes unnecessary irritation. It is surprising that many of these critics make a fetish of life-long celibacy. The reasons for such interpretations and descriptions on their part, therefore, are too obvious to call for any explanation. Hypocrisy and hallucination are This purely biased interpretation based interrelated as cause and effect. on certain traditional experience and practice (Ba'al-cults, Bacchus-rites and Aphroditic-rites), appears to be deplorably inadequate for fathoming the spiritual depth of Hindu mystic codes and forms.

Let us take for instance the question of Staff as a symbolic representa-tion, particularly, the plough and the shepherd's hook. Almost all Western authors writing on the subject of sex symbolism associate the staff with the phallic concept of virility and honour. A study of the seals and figures carved and painted on different materials discovered in Egypt, Greece, Asia Minor, Sumer, Babylon, Iran, Central Asia, Afghanistan and the Indus Valley, reveals the preponderance in the use of staff, distaff, hook, mace, plough, etc. as important adjuncts to human and semi- human figures. Even purely animal and bird representations are found on the carvings to be holding an arrow, a mace or a sword.

In this connection one should remember that Siva-Pasupati is supposed to be the bearer of a spear, or a mace, or the foot of a bed-stead (Khatteanga-vara-Dharaka) the bearer of a plough (Nakulita), and the Wielder of Thunder (Sambha, Vajri). A large number of gods would be found over all lands, and in all myths, answering to the same or similar descriptions. The Pharaohs of Egypt carried a hook for the royal mace; Moses and John the Baptist were known for their sticks; Jesus himself is imagined to have been the 'good shepherd' with his celebrated hook, which to this day is carried by his bishops (Fig. 12, H, H, H).

This only shows that there is in some minds a sad tendency for over- simplified and hasty equation based on outward motifs; it is a tendency to classify things in convenient groupings. In playing this logical game, they become victims of prejudice. Thus every straight line, every bell, every arch, every triangle, every circle, every hole to them must mean, what they in their prejudicial knowledge and experience of local history and tradition have been trained and accustomed to think. Hindu signs such as Ankufa, Pata, Vajra, etc., when describ- ed could certainly be equated with phallic designs. That is not a sufficient reason to claim that independently they could not have their own interpretations of 'keeping fury under control; keeping impulse under chain', or seeing the macrocosm and the microcosm as evolutes of the same point in the cosmic, respectively. A mind, moulded into phallic, would cast all thoughts into phallic. There is a world beyond the flesh; there is a space- world beyond the phallic. This is Šiva.

Fig 13

Erotic Symbolism Objections could be raised against the use of erotic symbolism in explaining spiritual
matters. Such objections are ill-founded. Life given, sex is a fact. It is more than foolish to close eyes to facts. Such prejudice exposes sick judgement and more sick minds. Such prejudice over the years have resulted in fostering an unnatural culture, where Sex, a great force and aid to the Life Force, has been made to remain a taboo. This attitude, instead of solving mental problems, has added to more and more problems. First of all sex has nothing but health to add to life; it adds perpetuity to Life; it confers the divine grace of Love on mates and families, and binds the human and animal world by the sweet chain of affection. All this, through misuse, could be turned into poison, as excessive food, excessive sleep, excessive drink, or excessive attachment would. Secondly, in a world where sex concerns Life's attention the most, and where sex produces the most intriguing mystery, it is significant to use the symbolism on the part of those who want to sublimate sex, and keep it constantly in association with the godly and the divine, the moral and the pure. What is wrong in tramming a fire?

A person whose mind is naturally bent towards sensual thoughts but who desires to control them, has no doubt a fear, which one readily understands, of anything which may provoke such thoughts. But such a man is, in this respect, lower than him who looks upon natural things in the natural way without fear of injury to him- self; and greatly lower than him to whom all is a manifestation of the One Consciousness, and who realises this in those things which are the cause of all to be imperfectly self-governed Paśu. No- thing is in itself impure. It is the mind which makes it so. It is however absolutely right that persons who feel that they have no sufficient self-control should, until they gain it, avoid what they think may do them injury. Apart from symbolism there are statements in some Sastras or so-called Sastras which are, in the ordinary modern sense, obscene. Some years ago a man wrote to me that he had come across the Tantras 'obscenity and the very reading of which was demoralising'. The very fact that these portions of the Scriptures had such an effect on him is a sufficient reason that he and others similarly situated should not

read them. The Tantra Sastra recognises the principle by certain injunctions into which I cannot enter here. The Kulärnava expressly says that the Chapter on the wine ritual is not to be read (Na pathed asavollasam); that is, by the unqualified.

Again, it is not necessary to admit either that every Text which calls itself a Tantra is a genuine one, or if so, that it was a product of a high class Sadhaka. What is authoritative is that which is generally admitted to be so. Even if the scripture be one of general acceptance, there is another matter to be remembered. As pointed out in the Karpûrādi Stotra (Hymn to Kāli), where instances are given, an apparently 'obscene' statement may disguise some- thing which is not so. Why it may be asked? An intending disciple may be questioned as to such passages. If he is a gross- minded, or a stupid man his answer will show it. Those who are not fit for the reception of the doctrine may be kept off on hearing, or reading, such statements which may be of such a character that any one but a fool would know that they were not to be taken literally. It may be that the passages which my correspondent read were of this character.

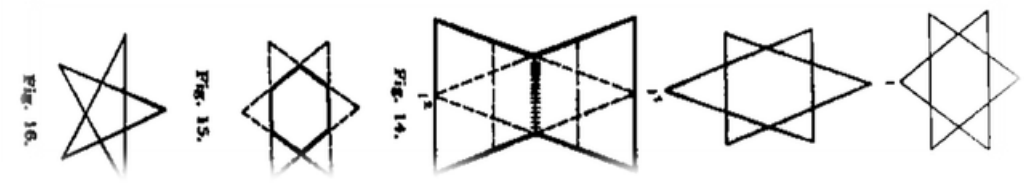
As regards erotic symbolism, however (for to this I now limit myself), it is not peculiar to the Tantras. It is as old as the hills, and may be found in other scriptures. It is a matter of embarrass- ment to the class I have mentioned that the Bible is not free from it. Milton, after referring to Solomon's wedded leisures says, 'in the Song of Songs, which is generally believed, even in the jolliest expression, to figure the spousals of the Church with Christ, things of a thousand raptures between those two lovely ones far on the hither side of carnal enjoyment.' If we would picture the cosmic process we must take the materials therefore from our own life. It is not always necessary to go to the erotic life. But man has generally done so for reasons I need not discuss here; and his selections must sometimes be admitted to be very apt. It has however been said that 'throughout Säkta Symbolism and pseudo- philosophising, there lies at the basis of the whole system the conception of sexual relationship as the ultimate explanation of the universe.' Reading these words as they stand, they are nonsense. What is true is that some Sakta Tantras convey philosophic and scientific truth by the media of erotic imagery, which is another

matter. But so also does the Upanisad. The charge of pseudo- philosophy is ill-founded unless the Advaita Vedanta is such. The Šakta Tantra simply presents the Vedantic teaching in a symboli- cal ritualistic form for the worshipper to whom it also prescribes the means whereby they may be realised in fact. Those who think otherwise have not mastered the alphabet of the subject.25

Tantra (Contd.)

To go back to the subject of Yantra now, if the message of the isosceles and the equilateral triangles and that of the Bindu (point) has been received by us, then, it is not difficult for us to imagine that although in our thinking we distinctly understand two forces, Siea and Sakti, fulfilling as two distinct functions, in fact never do the two stand as 'Two'. The operation of both Siva and Sakti is both universal and perpetually eternal. At no time the operation of the one could take place without the other's corres- pondence. The legend of Parvati closing the eyes of Siva (q.v.) testifies this, and illustrates this. Šiva and Sakti forces operate in togetherness.

This interlocked situation has been symbolically described as inter- locked triangles, in various interlocked positions; as has been done in anthropomorphic images of an interlocked Male-Female togetherness, vivifying a sense of terrifying dynamism, so much honoured by the Tibetans, and by the Maheśvara-Pasupata forms of Tantra rites. These divine couples, which are abundantly carved on the outer faces of many of the Maheśvara Siva temples throughout India, and are also worshipped in the central shrines in bronze images in and out of Tibet, have been significantly adorned with a thousand thighs, a thousand arms, a thou- sand heads, many more thousands of eyes, all the limbs radiating on all



the directions, prototypingthesublimeEternalCongressoftheStillwiththeDynamic, Matter with Energy, WillPowerwithConsciousConsummation,wherefromshootoutthe manifested world-formsinwhirlsandwhirlsofmanifestationsfromthequietnavalof Siva's unmanifested Inertness.ŠivaisTamas;SaktiisSattva;andtheWilltocreateisthe Rajas. The images arethebestexamplesofillustratingtheAbs-tractinsurrealisticstyle.

This interlocking couldbeseverallyandvariouslyrepresented:bytheapexcombination as in Fig. 14 (1), whereitcreatessixcorrelatedtrianglseachreflectingtheother.InFig. 14 (1) the interlockingappearsasahand-drum,whichcouldbeswungeitherwayinorder to produce the Nada(sound).Thehand-drum,itmightberemembered,isoneofthe Abkaranas (ornamentations)ofSiva.Itisnotachancechoice;symbolicallyitstandsfor the Time-phenomenonofCosmos-Chaos,Being-non-Being.

The Fig. 14 (11) furtherillustratesthepoint.Butthisfiguresubcreatessixtriangles,anda hexagon. Thus a hexagoninitselfhascometomeanacoitalinterlockingforcosmic creations (see Fig. 15).Sincethematerialworldissubdividedintothefive Mahat-Tattvas, or the five Bhûtas,theinterlockingissodone,orcouldbedone,astointerlock the triangles, and create Five instead of Six additional triangles, resulting in central.pentagon, insteadofahexagon(Fig.16).Thisbringsintoshapethreemore Yantras, all conveyingthesameideaofeternallyinterlockedSivaandSakti.Unconscious inertness and ConsciousPower.Inthiscasethetrianglesgetinvolvedtocreateafive pointed star, so dear totheZeonists.TheSoma-Mudratothisdataisafive-pointed(orsix-pointed) star held withinacircletouchingthecircum-ferenceofanotheroutercircleat one point, creating thevisionofacrescent.(CombineFigs.9,16).

We have noted beforethattheunlimitedspacebecomeslimitedwhentheunmanifest becomes manifest. Themostadequateandpreciseillustrationsforspaceshouldbea

triangle as pointed before. But this could be done by a circle as well. There is however a difference. Whereas the triangle conveys the idea of static (Sthiti) embryo with the three modes (Gunas), i.e., emergence, growth and dissolution, or spiritualism, tension and inertness, the circle, though describing space, also conveys the idea of motion, energy, perpetuity and flux.) Thus the Triangle is used speci- fically for Space, and the Circle for Time. (This also explains why there is a Wheel in the hand of Visnu, the Sun-God of Time and Growth; and why the Buddha took the Wheel as his symbol.) The circle with a pointed centre illustrates (Fig. 6) Space-Time-Eternity with Siva as the central focal origin of all, inclusive of Sakti.

This idea could be conveyed, as has been conveyed by other forms of illustrations. Fig. 12 (H", H12 illustrates the idea of cyclic continuity and perpetuity, progress and Time. Semetics use this form. According to the motional tendency, as illustrated by the radiating arms, these cyclic diagrams indicate the two forms of ritualism: Left, and Right (Vandvarta, and Dakşindvarta). The sign, the proud symbol of the Aryan way of life, was adopted by the Nazis. Svastika-(She wishes good for all) as an instrument of distinction from the Semetics whom, by some arbitrary, but convenient logic, Hitler took to be non-Aryans. There was a time when all the Aryans were the same. It was a time when culture prevailed over the noxiousness of nationalism. But then, when the uses of fire became fully developed, and the potentiality of fire had been realised, fire, not Sun, was adored; and on this issue a split appeared to have been the cause of the principal Aryan schism, the Semetics and the rest; the Assyrians and the non-Assyrians, the Soma or Haoma (Candra= Moon) people, and the Veda or the Sun-people (the Sürya people). This explains the two forms of the Svastikä in use.

Like the Svastika the discus too represents the Wheel of Time. Apollo, the Roman Sun-God, like the Hindu Sun-God Surya, is a discus thrower. So does the Buddhistic Marici. The Cross, signifying 'directions' (North, East, West and South), and Space, Motion and Still- ness, is only a simplified form of the Wheel or the discus. The Christ with his halo is

also representative of the Sun-God. Cross, Wheel and the Crescent together almost cover up the main religious symbols of the world faiths.

It is time we now recollect the Siddhantin's theory of Nada and Bindu along with Sadafisa. A-u-m the three-in-one-symbol in Sound, used as a Seed-Mantra, represents in sound forms what the crescent with the star within does. This Crescent form, like the A-U-M sound form, has been too dear to the Siva followers. The Siva people indicated their special way by preferring the Crescent to the Cross form, or the Moon to the Sun form. In Europe the Crescent and the Cross fought terrible battles over the centuries; in Hinduism the Crescent and the Cross recognised their respective merits, and decided to co-exist in spiritual pursuits. The ancient Essines had the knowledge. In them the Crescent and the Cross, the five-star and the six-star constellations, made little difference. It was when in Zionism both Jesus and Muhammed were regarded as antagonistic protestants that each of them with their respective prophets broke away from the parent body. In this schismic disintegration a secret and sinister hand was played by the politics of the time. But that belongs to another story.

Śri Yantra

Having dealt with most of the popular Yantras, we reserve for the concluding piece the explanation of the celebrated Sri Yantra. Here we quote, again, from the great Tantra scholar Woodroffe, whose explana- tion of the Sri Yantra need not be disturbed.

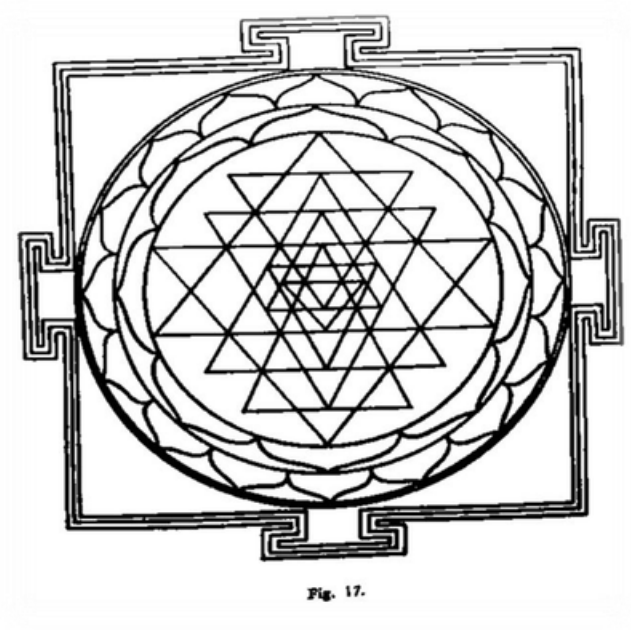


Fig. 17.

I am now in a position to explain the great Tantra or diagram whichisusedintheworship of the Mother and which is called the Sri Yantra, a symbol of theuniverseanditsCause.

I have not the time to describe it at length, but its meaning maybegenerallystated. It is composed of two sets of Triangles; one set is composed of fourMaleorSivatriangles, called Srikanthas denoting four aspects (Tattvas) of evolved andlimitedConscious- ness-Power, and the five Female or Sakti Triangles (Sivayuvatts)denotethefive vital functions, the five senses of knowledge, the five senses of actionandthefivesubtle and the five gross forms of matter. The place of the psychic elementasMindandthePsycho-physical substance of both Mind and Matter, I will indicate later.

The two sets of triangles are superimposed to show the unionofŠivaandSakti. As so united they make the figure within the eight lotus petals in thefullYantra.Outside these eight lotuses there are sixteen other lotuses. There are then somelines,andasurround with four gates or doors, which surround is found in all Yantras,andiscalledBhupura. It serves the purpose of what in magic is called a Fence.

This Yantra has nine Cakras, or compartments formed by the intersections of the Triangles.

There is first a red central point or Bindu, the Cakra of Bliss. The central point, or Bindu is Supreme Divinity-the Mother as the Grand Potential whence all the rest which this diagram signifies proceed. It is red, for that is the active colour, and thus the colour of Vimarşa-Sakti, or Evolving Power.

The second Cakra is the white inverted Triangle, or 'Cakra of All Accomplishment'. In the corners of this white Triangle are the Divinities of the General Psychological Substance and its first two evolutes as Cosmic Mind. Outside the Cakra is Kāma, the Divinity of Desire, with His bow of Sugarcane, which is the Mind as director of the senses; with its five arrows, which are the five forms of subtle matter, which in their gross forms are perceived by these senses; with his Noose which is Attraction, and his Goad, which is Repulsion. Another version (Taking the bow and arrow as one symbol) makes the three implements, the Powers of Will, Knowledge and Action.

The third Cakra is eight red Triangles, and is called 'Destroyer of all Disease', a term which means a lack of that Wholeness (Apûrnam Manata) which is spiritual Health.

The fourth Cakra is ten blue Triangles. The fifth is ten red Triangles. The seventh is eight red petals, and the ninth is yellow surround. Each of these Cakras has its own name. In them there are (sic) a number of lesser Divinities presiding over forms of Mind, Life and Body, and their special functions.

Those who hear the Devas spoken of as 'Gods' are puzzled by their multitudes. This is due to the ill-rendering of the terms Devas and Devis as gods and goddesses. God is the Supreme Mother and Father, the "Two-in-One', who are alone the Supreme Self, and as such receive supreme worship. All forms-whether of Devas, or men, or of other creatures-in so far as they are psycho-physical forms, subtle or gross, are manifestations of the Power of their Immanent Essence, which is Spirit, or Infinite Consciousness. That Essence is in itself one and changeless, but as related to a particular psycho-physical form as its cause, and Director of its functions it is Presiding Consciousness. Mind and Matter are not, as such, self guiding. They are evolved by Consciousness. The presiding

consciousness of the Form and its functions is its presiding Devata. A Deva is thus the consciousness aspect of the psycho-physical form. So the Deva Agni is the one Consciousness in its aspect as the Lord of Fire. A Devata may also mean an aspect as the

Casual Consciousness itself. And so Mahātripura-sundari is the name given to the creative aspect of such Consciousness-Power as Mahakali, which is an aspect of the same Power which dissolves all worlds.

The object of the worship of the Yantra is to attain unity with the Mother of the Universe in Her forms as Mind, Life and Matter and their Devatās, as preparatory to Yoga Union with Her as She is in Herself as Pure Consciousness. The world is divinised in the consciousness of the Worshipper, or Sadhaka. The Tantra is thus transformed in his consciousness from a material object of lines and curves into a mental state of union with the Universe, its Divinities and Supreme Deity. This leads to auto-realisation as Mindless Consciousness. The Sri-Yantra is thus the Universe and its one Casual Power of various aspects. The Worshipper, too, is a Śri Yantra, and realises himself as such.26

B. (ii) Mandalas

Like the Yantras, Mandalas too denote a subtle form of the Deity to be worshipped. This one is the last of the formal subtle icons on which we have been speaking so far.

Whereas the Yantra represents the psycho-physical aspects of the Supreme Consciousness which manifests into so many forms and functions, Mandala affects the same, but in a much simpler manner. There are many Mandalas; but all of them superficially look alike. Except the expert, the layman fails to read anything significant into them. The Mandalas are inscribed or described on more or less permanent stuff, like wood, metal, terracotta, stone, crystal, etc., and are held to be in themselves objects of great veneration. The nature of the Mandalas is more or less ephemeral, and temporary. Mandala means Court, a sphere of influence, a specially prepared place for the welcome of the venerated Deity, where the invoked Spirit finds an exclusive seat reserved for It during the entire progress of the rites; and where the chief deity holds court amongst a number of subsidiary deities

marked by different colours. In fact the preparation of the Mandala reflects the preparation of the Mind and Field" of Attention where the advent of the Deity has to be made possible through the prescribed rites.

Mandalas are laid out in different powdered colours. Very rarely, if at all, these are made to be permanent, and painted. These are designed as special seats for special Deity, and in each case, the particular mode of the Deity concerned; its special taste and nature are described in terms of colour.

The Mandalas are consecrated for the advent of the Grace of the Deity. These, too, are geometrically designed into a variety of 'courts' and 'yards', 'pockets' and 'arenas'. The actual drawing itself becomes an exercise in attention, and cultivation of the faculties of art, aesthetics and sense of grace. The concentration demanded in the drawing of a Mandala with care and exactness has to be seen to be believed. The outcome is certainly a piece of art.

Images: Anthropomorphic Forms: Mûrtis

Deity as concept, Deity as Sound, Deity as Signs; Deity as aniconic and iconic symbols, Deity as diagrammatic and geometrical designs, all these have been explained. Now we propose to enter into the vexed sub- ject of Deity as Images.

Hinduism rests on the Truth that the Real is One (Ekam Sat). The Upanisads, the Systems, support this; and to the discriminating scholar Purāṇas too contribute to this basic Truth. The Hindu who visits in the course of a day a dozen temples, and pours waters on a few dozen images, and during a year keeps a hundred 'special days', dedicated to a hundred holy names, wanders all over India dipping in so many rivers, and gathering the dusts of so many pilgrimages, fundamentally is aware of this Oneness. As it stands, it appears to be an untenable and impossible situation. It looks like having the cake, as also to be eating it; it is enjoying a position both ways. It has to be explained.

Representations of the Spiritual Ideas in Hinduism are done in forms of Pratika (symbol) or Pratima (Imaging). It is a question of imaging an Idea. Representations here aspire to

reflect spiritual Tattvas, Modes, Ideas, Causal evolutes emanating out of a central Power. These are, there- fore, to be more of an abstract nature, than exact. Abstract in Hindu art is as old as the hills because this art had been based on the abstract mind of the Hindu Aspirant. Let, then, none look forward to the distinction of verisimilitude in Hindu religious art. Hindu religious art would not re- present the verisimilar human to illustrate his ideas of a Devata. The forms must be there only for the assistance of the Sadhaka, specially for the one whose mind needs something to hold on to for his concentration.27 But these representations are invariably the results of what the Seer has ordained through

his Dhyana and Dharană. But it would equally be a For the devotee mistake to regard these as mere aides, or instruments. these are as inspired with vital life breath as any Being in form.

Thus the image worship for the Hindus distinctly differs from the idolatry of the Greeks and the Romans, who having been without the correct Pagan links of the Levant and the Orient, and who having later on being influenced by Hebrew sensitiveness against brazen figures, used to pay homage to idols as blind worship to forms and figures. The Greek philosophy, not even remotely, influenced the Greek religion. The nearest the Greek thoughts reached religious thinking was a form of mysticism with the idea of the Mother as a guiding force. Pythagoras was an exception; and he was the most 'hunted' of the Greek thinkers. The Hindus, in the ultimate analysis, denounce idolatry. The Goal for the Hindu worshipper never varies. It is Liberation through Realisation. Images are inspirational fountains to quench the thirst for his emotive personality, his basic aspirations. In fact the Hindus have opposed brazen idolatry as all spiritualists should. The Hindu Purānas, as the Classical Myths, sing of a large family in and out of the Olympus, where heaven and hell are crowded with a thousand names and forms. But for anyone who

could sagaciously discern and distinguish, the Dhyanas. and the Dharaṇās, and not merely the images, matter. In his Yoga- Sutra Patanjali makes it clear. The image worshippers themselves actually offer their worship to Yantras, Kalasas, Mirrors with the images. in front of them. For the proper justification and understanding of this attitude one has to be 'in the skin of the Hindu', and studiously follow the language of the rites. Those

who prescribe the worship always mention that these are helpful for the weak minded. There has never been a stage in Hindu practices where all and sundry have been treated as a solid mass of equal spiritual or intelligent aptitude. The Guna divisions apart, the individual in the Hindu system has been much cared for. To each according to his ability from each according to his substance, has been the community slogan for the Hindu spiritualist.

"Those who feel attracted to the contemplation of the Unmanifest (Avyakta), are faced with a problem, because the Being (himself) imprisoned in a body cannot grasp the ways of the Unmanifest."28 Along the road to the spiritual summit, there are stages and rest houses. This aim, however, is never lost as is evident from the Dhyana of the image. "Nothing is lost in this process; no obstruction hampers a progress; no stoppage inflicts dependence. Even a pinch of this aids to repel great fear, "29

We have already treated Dhyana; and we know by now that each of the images project an interpretation of the spirit as visualised by a Seer Yogi in his cosmic state. Deviations from these Dhyana-images are never tolerated. In no way must the images reflect the living; such verisimilitude has to be studiously avoided.

II

The Abstract in Hindu Art

Hindu art, to be worth anything, must be imaging some inner abstract inspiration which must possess an elevating quality. The mind must not be allowed to be vitiated by the limitations of flesh, and measure its perfection by what is not perfect, namely the human form. The Real and the Ideal must maintain their respective distance. The Absolute cannot have a limited form; and the absolute in art cannot be imitative. In its own nature what is imaged should soar much above the relative world of forms.

In this connection we propose to discuss the basis of Hindu art as it flourished through a religious medium.

By ignoring verisimilitude as a standard of judgement in art Hindu art was prophetically announcing an art form that was destined to take a few centuries later the European art-world by storm. "That figure is the most worthy of praise," said Leonardo da Vinci, "which by its action best expresses the passion that animates it." Any one who has seen the cave-carvings of the Mahişamardini Mürti of Mamallapuram (Madras), or the Mûrti of Kali, would easily accept the truth of the statement, particularly when one is conversant with the inner significance of the actual legend which the figures represent. "A work of art is great," says Dr. Ananda Coomaraswamy, "in so far as it expresses its own theme."30

It is an admitted fact that the praiseworthy trends in art-form fail to inspire the un-initiate, on whom the best of what Modern Art could produce would fall flat. For the proper understanding of the Indian art- complexes it is essential to be conversant with the ideals, and thought- pictures, which the Indian sculptors sought to bring out through their representations. Without that mental preparation, and fettered with conventional requisites, even the most appropriate art-forms might fail to draw any appreciable effect. Projection of progressive abstraction calls for well educated recepivity.

When Rodin brought out of a piece of dead stone a figure supposed to be that of Balzac the contemporary art-critics heaved gasps of incredible perplexity. When he made public his Hugo, the critics called the audacity 'suicidal'. Even his 'Kiss' was criticised. In the Phila- delphia museum, which had eventually acquired the celebrated piece, it had to be kept draped in deference to modesty! The incarcerations of Michael Angelo, Matisse, Van Gough and Gaugin have become classical legends.

Certain developments in the most modern art could be quoted in comparison with the Indian complex-figures, and indeed, the method of these is more than modern. Some painters of the present days have sought by many strange devices to create a synthetic and symphonic art, representing a continuity of thought and action, and interpretation of ideas belonging to a more than single phase of personality, an art of interpretation. And, if, as we now realise, this could be true of the human personality, we must understand that this

must be even more true of a cosmic divinity, who is, indeed, able by a division of attributes (Upadhis), to function in many places at one time.

To reflect such conception in art, demands a synthetic, rather than a representative language. It might well be claimed, then that, this method adopted sometimes in India, sometimes in Egypt, sometimes in Greece, and still employed, has proved successful from the practical point of view of pure expression; the setting said what had to be said: and this is after all the sure and safe foundations of art. 31

Is There a Natural Art?

After all, in art or in Mûrti, what is it that we really want to recognise? Is it the known we want to see repeated in art, or is it the unknown that we want to seek? We seek, and yet seek, and find the getting so often illusive; and yet seek to see it secured, in art, with a 'local habitation and a name'. Do philosophers really represent their ideas true to nature? What is this nature? Have we ever comprehended it in any or all its aspects? All that we seek for, speak of, think of in the idea-world are, in fact, the attempts of the striving mind to come out of a complex idea- world of its own freedom in a real realised state. In nature, therefore, there could never be a recapitulation in the sense of recaptivation. Re-surrection is not revivification; recapitulation is not recaptivation. The difference is fundamental; one is a spiritual and intellectual phenomenon, the other is a physical process. Art attempts to represent the unrepresent- able. Projection of a message, not reflection of an image constitutes its true joy. Reflected appreciation is a confirmation of that joy. The only reality that breathes life into it, is the human society, which inspires through the plastic as something vividly real in the ideal world alone. Art becomes prostituted when it degenerates into mere mechanics of photography; and photography, in order to elevate itself to the state of art, has to lift itself beyond the horizon of actuality. Something out-of- the-world has to be achieved in photographer's art in order to stamp on his creation the kiss of eternity, the consummation of Bliss. Art is a search for the fourth dimension. So is Dhyana; Dharaṇā; Murti and Meditation.

Inspirations seek forms of ideals into reality and achievement. Dhyana is the linguistic representation of that Idea; Mantra is the Sound- representation of that Idea. Without a constant endeavour of the mind (Sadhana), body and speech, all concentrated on the securing of the objec tive, it is impossible to peep into the vast expanse of the Idea-world of the artist, the music-maker, or of the seer. The so-called realist, or the surrealist, too, has his Dharma in the pursuit of his aim and craft. As soon as this is attempted to be achieved, abstract has been attempted to be achieved in concrete, which by its dimensional limitation would await a reception by the Mind; which again, is an emotive state of the personality concerned.

If we do not see creatures with a pair of wings on earth, it does not mean that we condemn all the fairies in the tales, or in the myths. We do not see any more Hercules or Perseus in life, it must not mean that heroism and valour must be standardised into a Joe Louis, a Bannister, a Gandhi or a Martin Luther-King. It must not mean that the ideals that these greats had stood for are also to be dead like them. In fact such ideas are alive like them. There is something that death cannot eliminate. The Ideal. The Idealism of what they sought transcends the reals of their failure.

To see through Hindu iconography is to peep through the curtain of unrealised realities into the yet unchartered world of unrealised idealism. It is in the world of Ideas that Mind survives; plans precede achievements. In the world of limited experience Mind lies prostrated and suffocated. Romantic idealism may be decried as self-indulgence, or self-pity; but not realistic idealism, which is the basis of all progressive thinking. To think is to be human. Down the ages, man has been seeking for a release. Man over-reached himself in striving after this release. Thinking provided this release; achievement satisfied his ego, and justified his existence. He felt that he existed for something. This was his release; his liberation of spirit. He has been seeking his release from the caves to the cloister; from the days of shivering cold to the glorious days of fire; from flesh to spirit; from a complex-clouded existence to a luminous liberation. This is Yoga. It is a progress; a growth; a becom- ing. It is Skill in Action. He first sought for his mind within his body; then he sought for his self in the mind; and then he wanted to reach the Universal Self with the

assistance of this poor imprisoned self. He voyaged for a further, nobler adventure; for a higher nobler release: the release of the Spirit from the Flesh; of Light from Darkness. Down the ages, Man has distinguished himself from other animals by not stopping at the gate of mere life and flesh; but by seeking something, which he preferred to describe as Immortality; i.e., by securing Life beyond the bounds of flesh. The human soul is confined within the complexes of body and mind. So, to be in search of a release is his birthright; Immortality is his birth- right. He has to achieve this, willy nilly, by hook or by crook.

Art is indeed a form of experiencing this release from Here to Beyond; from Life to Eternity. But the artist, a true and inspired artist, one who has been stung by the vitriol of the burning desire of resurrecting himself in art, seeks to experience through his art those of the human emotions which he has not yet discovered or tasted, but which he is determined to taste. The captive Man within him, the unexperienced emotions whitin him, the unmeasured dimensions within him, have to be brought out, and established, experienced, and bequeathed to the coming man, specially the records of his struggles with the mute and mysterious un- known. Man discovers himself in his art. Those who think that art mirrors life, as it is seen and felt, do not realise that no true artist could ever state with satisfaction, that for him, seeing life, and feeling life, have been experiences achieved. No true artist keeps the mirror as his limit. He must cultivate in-depth seeing. The true artist sees, and sees not; for he seeks to see beyond what the eye could see; he seeks to experience with all his soul what he sought to experience, but was not able to reach to a degree of satiation. The abstraction of this mute, but dynamic urge, makes the artist what he is. To expect from him a verisimilar photographic representation is to reduce the sublime to bathos.

Limitations of Verisimilitude

The failure of the efforts of verisimilitude lies in this that it sets for the artist a limit, and at his best he is stopped at the physical level. Its glamour is very like the glamours of the acrobatic of a lion imprisoned within a circus-cage. Admirable? Yes. Spectacular? Yes. True? never! The most realistic artificial is less than the real; and the best of real is far less

than the Ideal. No imitation could replace the natural. In order to become a thing of art, a part of the artist himself must be retained by the object produced. Beauty is to experience the Sublime in the natural; to experience what is inimitable, unpredictable and individual in Nature. There is no Replica in Nature.

True art represents the Subjective, the Spirit; not the Form. The figure of the impossible Hindu gods and goddesses of many hands, feet and heads represent the spirit, the message, the Idea. The formally perfect and anatomically correct figures of the Classical, Renaissance and neo-classical artists of Europe were, as we learn from record, actually modelled from what they thought to be the perfect body. They idealised; which is not the same as transfiguring the Idea. Art-forms that seek per- fection in body contours invariably provoke the human hunger for passion, emotion and the libido. Such art amazes; but stirs other hungers. The legend of Pygmallion is a pointer. Every time the devout artist tried to represent the Christ, or the Buddha, he sought to represent the spirit that these names conveyed; at no time did he attempt the actual execution of his task from a physical stand-point. Were the Christ-figure, or the Buddha-figure to draw from the onlooker the flesh-feeling, figure- seeking glance of admiration, the artist's work would have been in vain. True art is revealing. Forms stand justified only when the spirit within becomes more pronounced, as a great flower appears more pronounced than the tree that bears it. One has to watch such plants as the poui in the Caribbean, the Dhak or Paläsh in India, or the Jacaranda in Spain, to be convinced of this truth. Forms are mere junks when spirit fails to speak through the material representation. Transcendence is the breath of art.

Looking at Rodin's Balzac, Boindelle had cried out, "But it is a satyr you have made, maitre, a nude Satyr."

Unperturbed, but amazed, Rodin firmly rejoined, "But Balzac was a satyr. Wasn't he?"

"What!", exclaimed scandalised Pisne, "Do you want this naked Balzac to stand at the Place du Plais Royal?"

"I may get the body clothed, when I get it right," condescended Rodin. He was not prepared to clothe a body he never made; he could clothe it only after it had been correctly made, that is, when the body had revealed what it had to reveal, which is more than the body. The right spirit of art does not cover; it discovers. We uncover the nudes; but discover the soul. Art is discovery: discovery into not only the newer, but also into the nobler regions of the soul of man. It is not representation, but interpretation; not after-thought, but a foresight; not history and record, but a prophecy, and oracle. It is not recapitulation, but resurrection. It is not vivified memory; it is the nativity of a new hope, new era, new horizon.

The familiar cannot be art. The familiar 'what I see' becomes art only with an emphasis on 'how I see'. A touch of the magic unfamiliar must descend on the familiar in art, so that the people would see with their 'third eye' and exclaim, "Who knew that the London sky had so much beauty," as they did, when they saw their familiar London-sky and the Thames-bank brought on the canvases of Turner. Without Dickens, few would ever be able to recognise their own London. Grotesque as an art was the serious contribution that Robert Browning had brought to English poetry. Without Emerson's appreciative insight into the new horizons that the 'Leaves of Grass' had broken, Walt Whitman's personal poems would not have been elevated to the sublime status of eternal art. That Columbus discovered America may not really be as true as to say that the discovery of America only now has started with Sinclair Lewis; Theodore Dreyser; Eugene O'Neill; Steinbeck, Robert Frost and Heming- way. It takes a Shakespeare to breathe reality of art into the grotesque of a Caliban; a Steinbeck to inject abomination and nervous pukings into cold pages of writing, and yet elevate it to receive the provocations of eternal introvertive questions. Without the capacity to see the symbolic in art, none could ever discover the beauty in Fitzgerald's Omar Khayyam, Blake's poems and paintings, Henry Moore's sculptures, Tagore's Mysticism and the nuances of oriental symphony in the lines of Hafiz and Gibran. The soul of art lies in its feeling; not in its monumentalism. This is vital for the Hindu artist. He not only knows it, but cultivates it; so prescribes the art treatises of the Hindus. The ancient Hindu masters, such as, Babhravya (referred to by Vätsäyana and

Pancadasi), Yasodhara, Varähamihira and Vätsäyana have laid emphasis on the vitality of rhythmic lines, meaningful actions, and feelings of forms, as well as of in- fusion of Grace. Verisimilitude as an art-achievement has been relegated to the lowest order by these art-critics, placing it just above acquiring such technical skills as using brushes, mixing colours, etc.

Basis of Hindu Images (General)

While discussing migrations and the Bactrian Greeks we have referred to the influence of the Gandhara art on our Classical image forms. The Renaissance of the Hindu art based on a new urge of Pauranic Hinduism had ushered in an era quite distinct to what the Vedic or the Buddhist India had known.

It was Kanishka, the Scythian Monarch turned a Buddhist (78-101 A.D.), who is reputed to have introduced the culture of beautifully carved images. He, of course, was acquainted with the Bodhisattva forms and the images of the Buddha. His antecedents brought to bear on the Indian forms a strong Bactrian stamp. But it would be too presumptuous to say that before the first century A.D. engraved images were unknown to India. The Mohenjo-daro relics and the celebrated Pasupati engravings belie such a theory. But these were reliefs. No unrelieved three dimensional form, dated prior to the Mathura period, has been yet found to represent the Pauranic gods, or Śiva. The rock-cuts too are, strictly speak- ing, nothing but reliefs. It is extremely doubtful if these had to go through the Agamic consecration ceremony of Prana-Pratiṣṭhā.

The motif of the Mohenjo-daro Pasupati tablets, as of the Mesopota- mian and Iranian excavations of similar art-forms is strikingly similar in their choice of technique, design and material. The preponderance of terracotta is of special interest. But, the similarities, whatever these are, end here. The Sumerian art-forms evidence maturer skill of both design and execution. Their message is eloquent. Other than that we find in those earlier forms an emphasis on animal and serpent motifs, and several zoomorphic images where vitality and power make the figures alive.

Details such as horns, tridents, staff, yogic postures, head-gears, shoes, dress, decorations and ornamentations, serpents, lions, bulls come in fami- liar succession. Above all the popularity of the Linga-Yoni combinations is evidenced by the plentitude of the figures lying scattered all over. A closer study of these similarities is of extreme importance to our enquiry. (i) An Assyrian relief of Gilgamesh; (ii) the image of a Mother Goddess from Paleolithic Europe; (iii) another from Egypt (3500 B.C.); (iv) from Mesopotamia (3000 B.C. and 2000 B.C.); and (v) the Syrian images of 14th cent. B.C. bear striking resemblances with one another. The chain is unmistakable; although now it appears that the link had broken somewhere.

Evolution of Images

But the custom of bringing into shape full-blooded anthropomorphic figures did not get popularity in India until the Kushanas. Before that time the countries in the Near East lying just outside the borders of Hindukush (White India) had been the hot-bed of a Hellenic culture.

With the invasion of Alexander, the Achaemenid Empire had been erased, and its place was taken over by the Selucids. The Bactrian culture which sprang out of this change was inevitably influenced by the anthropo- morphism of the Greeks, and the zoomorphism of the Assyrians. The Mahāyāna Buddhism which specially flourished in N. W. India and Tibet was much influenced by the objective representations of their mythological gods and goddesses.

Buddha himself appears to have been aware of this tendency of dei- fication and sculptured representations. Like the Vedic people he, too, had forbidden to erect temples over human representations. This was the reason why the devout, anxious to commemorate the Lord, bypassed the Master's orders by erecting, in place of temples, gigantic Stúpas (ceremonial mounds, almost pyramidical in structures, and ancestors of the Pagodas) which were built over certain sacred relics of the living Buddha's body, a nail, a hair, a tooth, or perhaps just a piece of his garment.

The temptation of perpetuating the memory of the beloved is irresisti ble. "But the inequity of oblivion", says Sir Thomas Browne, "blindly scattereth her poppy, and deals with memory of men without distinction to merits of perpetuity." We also know how ardent new converts could be. Hence Emperor Kanishka started the mode of erecting figures in the style of the Mahayana Tantric figures of Tibet and of the Bactrian statues. But the Buddha had already been dead several centuries back when Kanishka's ardour broke the bounds; and no correct and specific replica of the Buddha's image could be executed. Hence started the images of the Buddha on the basis of delivering his message of tranquillity and compassion.

Then came the Jätakas. These anecdotes, mostly narrated by the Buddha himself, provided the artist and the devout with a thousand passions and sentiments, as did the myths of

Homer to the Greek artist; or the tales of the Epics to the later Hindu artist. Two points, however, are worthy of notice: one, that the impetus of sculptoring of Hindu images was drawn from alien sources; two, the art forms, so produced, became in the years to follow the focal points for the devouts to congregate. Came the temples, the pilgrimages and the temple cities. It is in this way that India, through the backdoor of Mahāyāna Buddhism, as

influenced
by the Bactrian Gandhara art, came to accept the deified forms of prophets and kings, as of her mythical and epical heroes. The Tantric images had their own trends, and these defy any enquiry into a historical beginning, except that these too descended from the Himalayan and ante-Himalayan regions.

Certain Jaina and Buddha figures are often confused with Hindu images; but in reality the idea of Nandana Silpa, or Fine Arts, through the development of deified human figures must have been a growth follow- ing Kanishka. That this was a Dravido-Bactrian, and an Iranic-Hellenic trned introduced in India is the most accepted view of scholars.

Even so, we do not find sculptural representations of the Buddha being worshipped within the sanctuaries until at a much later date. Only the walls and railings of the Buddhistic

places of worship had been decorated with sculpturings of the Jātaka stories, or with the life- incidents of the Lord. But the tradition of leaving the main sanctuary alone from any physical representations appears to have been well- respected.

This scene changed with the entry of the Imperial Guptas. Then came the Sungas, Cholas, Chalukyas, and down to the Palas of Bengal, from Kashmir to Kerala, the spurt of a feverish activity in modelling and sculptoring overwhelmed the Hindu world. We know how this period coincided, generally, with the great migrations from the Orient. No more would the symbol forms and the meditative puritanism of the ancients satisfy the longing passions of the devout. Buddhism had given way to Tantricism; Hellenism had given way to Vaisnavism and Bhakti; and last of all the out-castes of the Vedic society, under the aegis of the revolution caused by the Buddhistic upheaval urged for their place in the Hindu world. Saivism and Vaisnavism gave these masses what they needed, a place within the orthodox Hinduism, with Siva as their God of Gods.

Hindu Revivalism

Strong kingships organised a reorientation of the Vedic into a The epics, the Purāṇas, the laws, the lores, a Brähmanical institution.

variety of treatises came forth to have this Renaissance established. The nihilism of Buddhism, the excesses of the Mahayana Tantricism were established and reformed, so that place was made for the accommoda- tion of those foreign migrants and their respective religious forms under the great umbrella of the Hindus. Exclusive Vedism, the days of the Aranyakas and the Brahmanas gave way to the Grhya Sutras, and the Smrtis. Devotional soul of the masses had been cast in a special mould because of the nuances that they had inherited from the Buddha-tales as those of the tales from the other lands. In order to reach this mind Hindu writers churned out a new pattern of restating the old traditional systems which included history, geography and culture all in one body. This gave to the Hindu the great heritage of the Puranas.

The Atharva Veda, the Agamas, the Nigamas had already laid down a firm basis. The art-forms suggested by these had to be achieved. The treatises of Varähamihira, Sukräcārya, Vätsäyana, Agni Purana, Kurma Purana, Väbhravya, Yasodhara-between 312 B.C. and 1100 A.D. hosts of work on art, sculpture, architecture, metal-casting, painting, dance, music and stage-plays, even sophisticated critical studies of forms of literature, testify the urgent demands of the time in these areas. The responses of the social life of the time are fully mirrored through this mass of literature.

The Puranas and the Hindu Obscene Literature

As we are on this topic, we propose to deal with two side-issues which often confuse even the most sympathetic students of the Hindu way of life. The first of these concerns the mythical and almost untenable structure of the Puranas, which do not appear to conform to any laws of heaven or earth in their disregard of all known standards of either Time or Space. Thus the Hindu myths have supplied a favoured ground for a type of mind to indulge in all the antics of sarcasm, blasphemy and Rabelaisian humour.

It takes a long and specialised training to understand the Puranas. The key word in the reading of the Puranas is the word Vyasa. We note with our curious mortal amazement that the author Vyasa had conveniently finished the great Epic Mahabharata, as well as the 18 Puranas, at least one of which (Skanda) appears to have been even a longer book than his Epic; and the time-chart of writing these books runs well over several centuries, as we find in these books references to Chandragupta, Pusyamitra, and even some of the public figures under the East India Company! This incredible and amazing performance has to be taken seriously; and swallowed. It is indeed a difficult task. But there is a catch. The people, the experts, the scholars who, generation after generation, are called upon to explain these books are themselves known as Vyasa. The fact is that the word Vyasa means 'to explain elaborately what had been stated cryptically before'; and even not stated at all; only suggested. And in this explanation of the word lies the secret. The original Krsna-Dvai- payana, son of Parásara and Matsyagandha (a tribal girl), who was a dark coloured seer, had been the narrator of the Epic Jaya, of which the Maha- bharata is a part,

retold by later narrators. He had thereby established a new method of putting together the history of his people, their culture and their spiritual forms and manners. To be able to communicate all this in one string of story required of him a special skill. In fact he had retold the ancient traditional wisdom of the Vedas and the Upanisads for the understanding of the people of a later age, whose intellectual sharpness had been tarnished and diminished due to various social and historical factors. And whenever later writers, under similar circumstances, and under similar duress, had to restate the laws of old in terms of the new, they adopted the method of Vyasa; and the later Vyasa who did not actually write, at least took sufficient training, to be able to explain the Purana-Method, and

thereby maintain a tradition. To understand the spirit of the Purānas, one has to learn the art of Vyasa; only then one could explain it, and communicate.

What gave these Purānas their scriptural value, and a distinctiveness of class, amongst the myths of the world, was the formula in which they were written. They make use of a special method of symbolism which, as a literary craft, exhibits a refined sensitiveness. This method was so noble, encyclopaedic and yet captivating and effective, that it was at once received with acclamation by the people. When, in the course of history, under varying challenges, Hindu life had to confront new situations, seers expounded systems after systems of thought, each in its own way, but each aiming at the central Truth, viz., the Real is One. For the popular exposition of these new situations, the new gods, the new trends, the new systems a Purāṇa was brought forth, with the result that there hangs a period of at least 1000 years between the first and the last Purāṇa; and when one considers the Mahabharata within this group the period runs into more than 4000 years!

Thus we remain indebted to Svetāśvatara Upanisad, Siva Puraṇa, Vayu Purana, Märkandeya Purana besides the Mahabharata for our researches into the subject of the

growth and spread of Saivism, as a distinct trend of religious activity quite apart from what is known as phallicism.

Hence comes the topic of obscenity. Some of the Siva legends make use of a technique which is superfluously mistaken as obscene. We propose to get into this subject of obscenity.

As examples of absurd obscenity, enthusiastic authors untiringly keep on referring to two of the Siva-legends. Both are being narrated a little later. Taken outwardly, and kept limited within the dictionary meaning of the letters of the words used, these are as absurd as the legends of Lilliput or Brobdingnag, or as obnoxiously obscene as Houyhnhnms and Yahoo. But that has been the way of all symbolic and metaphorical writing. Spiritual writing is too sensitive to bear any empirical scrutiny. Taken as obscene tales, their obscenity beats the stories of Rabellais, Sappho, Bocaccio, and Voltaire all put together. But topics and style which we regard as obscene and lecherous today were consi- dered quite normal amongst the most cultivated nations of other times. Herodotus, for example, remarks (1.10): "Among some barbarous races it is considered disgraceful to appear naked." Comments are unnecessary. In classic Alexandria, ladies went about with their husbands along the popular river-banks and ports to admire courtesans, known for their

beauty in scanty diaphanous garments. Indeed they regarded it to be a point of grave obscenity if they, the great courtesans, of whose talents the nation felt proud, failed to appear in nature's own attire; covering breasts was an offence against decorum in Greece and Egypt till the days of Cleopatra.

But times change standards of morals and decency. To appear to occupy the position of self-elevated judges of morals, and judge past- times by present standards, is in itself an act of unjustifiable imposition. In the Introduction to his book 'Aphrodite', Pierre Louys remarks

Judging the ancient Greeks by the ideas actually received, not one exact translation of their greatest writers could be left in the hands of a young student. If M. Munet Sully should play his role of Oedipus without cuts, the police should suspend the presentation. If Leoconte de Lisle had not prudently expurgated Theocritos, his version would have been suppressed the same day it was put on sale....We possess important fragments of